THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

RALPH ERSKINE, *A. M.*

CONSISTING OF HIS

SERMONS and POEMS.

IN TEN LARGE VOLUMES OCTAVO.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

☞ The Editors of the preſent handſome Edition of the Rev. Mr. RALPH ERSKINE'S *Practical Works*, in Octavo, purchaſed, ſome time ago, from the Heirs of Mr. Newlands, the original Proprietor of theſe Works, the ſole right of Printing, Publiſhing, and Vending them: and judge it proper to notify this to the Public, that none may imagine they are invading the late Proprietor's right; and to aſſure all others, that if any preſume to incroach upon theirs, in any reſpect, they will ſubject themſelves to a proſecution.



THE

SERMONS,

AND OTHER

PRACTICAL WORKS,

Of the Late REVEREND and LEARNED

MR. RALPH ERSKINE,

Miniſter of the Goſpel in DUNFERMLINE.

CONSISTING OF

Above One Hundred and Fifty SERMONS,
beſides his POETICAL PIECES.

IN TEN LARGE VOLUMES OCTAVO.

To which is prefixed,
An ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR'S LIFE and WRITINGS,
with an ELEGIAC POEM, and large CONTENTS.

Chriſt is all, and in all. COL. iii. 11.

VOL. III.

Entered in Stationers-Hall.

GLASGOW:

Printed by WILLIAM SMITH.
Sold by W. SMITH and J. BRYCE, bookſellers, *Saltmercat.*

MDCCLXXVII.

SERMONS,

AND OTHER

PRACTICAL WORKS,

Of the Late Reverend and Learned

Mr. RALPH ERSKINE,

Minister of the Gospel in Dunfermline.

CONSISTING OF

Above One Hundred and Fifty SERMONS,

besides his POETICAL PIECES.

In Ten LARGE VOLUMES OCTAVO.

BRITISH MUSEUM

An Account of the Life, Gifts and Writings,
with an Enlarged and Large CONTENTS

Chrift is all, and in all. Col. iii. 11.

VOL. III.

Entered in Stationers-Hall.

GLASGOW:

Printed by WILLIAM SMITH.

Sold by W. Smith and J. Bryce, Bookfellers, Salmarket.

MDCCLXXVII.

CONTENTS.

SERMON XXXIV,—XLVI.

Goſpel-Principle the Foundation of Goſpel-Practice; or, the great Duty of receiving Chriſt, and walking in him, opened, 9

COL. ii. 6. *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

After a copious introduction and ſuccinct diviſion of the words, ſhewing the ſcope of the apoſtle, and ſenſe of the verſe, the following general topics are handled at great length, *viz.*

I. The believer's character and dignity, as a receiver of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, delineated, 16
1. The act of faith, as it is a receiving Chriſt, opened, *ibid.*
What is ſuppoſed in it, *ibid.*
That Chriſt is offered in the goſpel, 16, 17
To whom he is offered, - 17
Upon what grounds, - - 20
For what ends, - - 22
In what capacities, - - 42, 82
What the act of faith conſiſts in, 29
Its nature and qualities opened, 30
2. The object of this act, *viz.* CHRIST, conſidered, 37
Both doctrinally and perſonally, 37, 39
3. The capacities Chriſt is received in, 42
As a Jeſus and as a Lord, - 43, 44

II. The believer's duty, *viz.* to walk in Chriſt, opened, 48
1. The denomination of the duty, - 49
It denotes practice, - - *ibid.*
It imports progreſs, - - 53
It implies permanency, - - - 54
2. The qualifications of the duty, - 55
What this walk ſuppoſes, - - 57
What it excludes, - - 59
What it includes, - - 61
What it infers, - - - 66

III. The rule of the believer's duty, and the proportion it ſhould bear to the reception of Chriſt, evinced, 68
1. The proportion of this walk conſidered both as to the act and manner of the reception, - *ibid.*
2. The proportion of it as to the object received, in the text, 72
As the *Chriſt*, doctrinal and perſonally, 73
As a *Jeſus*, to walk in him before God and the world, 75
As a *Lord*, the Lord of your life, time, graces, comforts, ordinances, duties, *&c.* - 76
The proportion of the believer's walk is to be ſuitable to all the particulars deduceable from theſe three generals, 81

IV. The connexion between the believer's character and duty; or between receiving Chriſt, and walking in him, opened, 93
The connexion viewed with the context, 94
How the parts of the text ſtand connected, 98
The order of the connexion conſidered, *ibid.*
Why there muſt be a receiving *before* a walking in Chriſt, - - 99
Why there ſhould be a walking in him *after* the reception of him, - 103
V. The application of the ſubject, in a variety of uſes, 108
Uſe 1. For information, to inſtruct us in ſome precious truths, - - 109
Uſe 2. For reproof, to convict us of ſome errors, both doctrinal and practical, - - 119
Six doctrinal errors refuted, - 119,—127
Ten practical errors reproved, 127,—130
Uſe 3. For examination, to try our faith and obedience, 131
Faith, as it receives Chriſt, tried, - *ibid.*
How faith is wrought by the Spirit, 132
How it was acted when Chriſt was received, 136
Goſpel-obedience, as a walking in Chriſt, tried, 142
By the ſcripture qualities of it, - 143
By the goſpel proviſion for it, - 150
Uſe 4. For exhortation, to excite and direct us both to receive and walk in Chriſt, - - 157
(1.) Unbelievers exhorted to receive Chriſt, *ibid.*
1. Who may be denominated unbelievers, 158
Twelve ſigns of unbelief, - *ibid.*
2. Six motives to perſuade to receive Chriſt, 163
Eight conſiderations to engage thereto, 166
An eight-fold generation who reject him, 170
Eight bleſſings received along with Chriſt, 173
Four evil things received by the rejecters of him, 177
The malignity of unbelief in rejecting Chriſt, 180
Its ſinfulneſs, in ſix particulars, *ibid.*
Its hurtfulneſs, in four particulars, 190
The excellency of faith in receiving Chriſt, 193
3. Directions offered exciting to receive Chriſt, 198
The ſad ſtate theſe are in without him, 199
The right uſe of the means of faith to be ſtudied, 201
The obſtructions of faith to be removed, 204
Six of theſe impediments mentioned, *ibid.*
Four things unbelief induces to build on, 207
The art of pleading for grace to receive Chriſt, 208
Six things that may be pled, *ibid.*
4. Ten objections removed againſt receiving Chriſt, 213
(2.) Believers exhorted to walk in Chriſt, 226
Eight conſiderations offered for clearing this walk, 227
Ten properties and qualities of this way, 239

Motives and perſuaſives to walk in Chriſt, 260
Ten concomitants ſhewing the excellency of this walk, - - *ibid.*
The effects of the walk, pointing out the neceſſity of it, - - 266
Arguments exciting to a Chriſtian walk, *ibid.*
The glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, *ibid.*
The advantage of man, - 271
The credit of the goſpel, - 276
Directions in order to walking in Chriſt, 279
The impediments that hinder it to be avoided, *ibid.*
Ten of theſe mentioned, 279,—282
Let every action in life be a ſteping in this way, 283
Improve the means that tend to advance it, 287

SERMON XLVII,—LI.

The Main Queſtion of the Goſpel Catechiſm, WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? 290

MAT. xxii. 42. *What think ye of Chriſt?*

After an introduction to the words, the connexion traced, the occaſion of propounding the queſtion aſcertained, the words themſelves divided, explained, their emphaſis pointed out, and the ſcope of them ſummed up in a doctrinal propoſition, the following general heads of method are illuſtrated, *viz.*

I. Some general remarks premiſed for clearing the doctrine, 297
II. The import of the queſtion pointed out, - 303
1. Objectively, with reſpect to Chriſt, in twelve particulars, - - 303,—316, 386
2. Actively, with reſpect to the act of thinking, 386
3. Formally, reſpecting the quality of the act, 326
4. Subjectively, reſpecting the perſons to whom the queſtion is put, - - 331
III. The reaſons of the doctrine aſſigned, why this is the leading queſtion in the Chriſtian catechiſm, - 338
IV. The application of the point, in a variety of uſes, 346
Uſe 1. For information, in four uſeful inferences, *ibid.*
2. For conviction and reproof, - 353
Who think little of Chriſt, - 354
Six cauſes why the world think little of him, 355
3. For trial and examination, - 361
Ten qualities of right thoughts of Chriſt, *ibid.*
Twenty poſitive evidences of them, 368
4. For lamentation, over Chriſt-deſpiſers, 381
5. For exhortation, to think much of Chriſt, 382
6. For advice, highly to eſteem and commend him, 384

SERMON LII, LIII.

The Gradual Conqueſt; or, Heaven won by little and little, 387

DEUT. vii. 22. *And the Lord thy God will put out theſe nations before thee, by little and little.*

Having divided and explained the words, viewed them in their ſpiritual meaning, and wrapt them up in a doctrinal obſervation, the following general topics are illuſtrated, *viz.*

I. Who are the true Iſrael of God, enquired into, 389
II. The heavenly Canaan, which they are brought to the poſſeſſion of, viewed, - - 391
1. Viewed in its types, - - *ibid.*
2. Conſidered in its epithets, - - 392
3. Viewed in its parts, - - 393
4. Conſidered in its properties, - 394
III. What nations of enemies oppoſe them in their way to the heavenly Zion, enumerated, - - 395
IV. The mighty Conqueror, *The Lord their God*, deſcribed, 402
V. The manner of the conqueſt, *by little and little*, conſidered, 409
VI. The reaſons of this gradual conqueſt, aſſigned, 430
VII. The application of the whole in ſeveral uſes, 438
Uſe 1. For dehortation and caution, - *ibid.*
2. For information, in ſix particulars, 441
3. For examination and trial, - 437
4. For exhortation, addreſſed to two ſorts of perſons, 453
(1.) To unbelievers, who are at peace with the nations, 454
(2.) To believers, on the field, making war with them, 457

SERMON LIV.

The Female Preacher; or, the Woman of Samaria's Sermon to the Men of the City, *&c.* 464

JOHN iv. 29. *Come, ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*

The context being viewed, the connexion traced, the words analized and explained, and wrapt up in a general propoſition, the following general topics are diſcourſed, *viz.*

I. What is to be underſtood by Chriſt manifeſting himſelf to a perſon, - - - 470
II. What are theſe ſin-diſcovering and ſoul-debaſing effects of Chriſt manifeſting himſelf, - - 478
III. What are theſe Chriſt-exalting commendations wherein ſuch diſcoveries of Chriſt vent themſelves, - 481
IV. The reaſons why ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt have ſuch a ſelf-debaſing and Chriſt-exalting influence, - 489
V. The application of the whole in ſundry uſes, 492

SERMON XXXIV.

GOSPEL-PRINCIPLE, the *Foundation* of GOSPEL-PRACTICE; or, the great Duty of *Receiving Chriſt*, and *Walk-in him*, opened *.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

YOU have here ſuch an ordinary text, that perhaps there are few preſent but have heard ſermons preached upon it: and yet it is ſuch an extraordinary text that we can never hear enough upon it, nor ever reach to the bottom. There is more in it than ever yet we ſaw or felt. It contains a ſum of heart and life religion, and of all that concerns either faith or manners; a GOSPEL-PRINCIPLE, which is *believing in Chriſt;* and a GOSPEL-PRACTICE, a *walking in him. As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

The apoſtle here, in this epiſtle, gives a good copy to all the miniſters of Chriſt to follow in their preaching and teaching. 1. To *inform the judgments* of people, and lay a good foundation in the knowledge of Chriſt. 2.

* This ſubject was entered upon on a thankſgiving-day, after the celebration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper at Kinglaſſi; and afterwards finiſhed in a ſeries of diſcourſes, in his own church in Dunfermline, in the year 1724.—This is the third impreſſion.—Theſe diſcourſes are to be had in a volume by themſelves,

To *excite their affections* after Chriſt, and to rouze and awaken them to a walk and converſation ſuitable to their knowledge and faith; knowing that there can be no ſure building erected in a goſpel-walk, unleſs there be a ſure foundation laid in a goſpel-principle. That the believing Coloſſians were well informed and inſtructed, the apoſtle obſerves, to the condemnation and praiſe of free grace; and he exhorts them to perſevere in the doctrine wherein they were taught by Epaphras, *a faithful miniſter of Chriſt*, chap. i. 7.: However, there were falſe teachers that had crept in among them who were ready to *beguile them with enticing words*, chap. ii. 4. and that had actually ſeduced and carried away the Galatians from their true faith which they formerly profeſſed, Gal. i. 6, 7.: yet he would have the Coloſſians to ſtand faſt in their faith, and in that doctrine which had been truly and honeſtly delivered to them. The apoſtle commends the Coloſſians for their *ſtedfaſtneſs*, as you ſee in the verſes preceding our text; and yet he exhorts them more and more to this duty, as you ſee from the verſe following the text; which may let us in to ſomething of the intent of the text itſelf; intimating, that the doctrine of Chriſt had been brought to them, and they had believed it, and received it, and Chriſt in it, and that though this was well, yet it was not all; they were therefore, thro' grace, to perſevere in that doctrine, to walk forward in the knowledge of Chriſt, and his goſpel, and in the practice of what they knew.

The verſe that goes before the text ſets before us two things, that denote the good conſtitution and temperament of a right church, ſuch as the church of the Coloſſians was. 1. The firſt is its *order;* O but it makes a beautiful church when all things in it are *ordered according to the pattern ſeen in the mount*, with reſpect to the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government! When the doctrine is ſound and lively; the worſhip, pure and ſpiritual; diſcipline, powerful and impartial; and the government, beautiful and regular: but it is a very unpleaſant appearance in a church, when *confuſion*, with reſpect to all theſe, doth take place. 2. The ſecond was *ſtedfaſt in the faith*. The apoſtle rejoiced to behold, in the church of

of Coloſs, not only their order, but their ſtedfaſtneſs in the faith of Chriſt, in the doctrine of the goſpel; for, when a church fails in this, then all goes to wreck. If the apoſtle Paul were on earth, and to write an epiſtle to the church of Scotland, would any think that he would have this to commend us for, *Our order and ſtedfaſtneſs in the faith?* O for ſuch a proſpect of affairs in this iſland, that we who have been Corinthians, in reſpect of our *diſorders* and *diviſions*, and Galatians, in reſpect of our *unſtedfaſtneſs* in the right faith of Chriſt, and the revolt of many from Reformation-truth, may become Coloſſians in reſpect of our order and ſtedfaſtneſs in the faith; *I joy to behold your order and ſtedfaſtneſs*, ſaith the apoſtle.

Now, as there are two things in that preceding verſe that ſhew the good conſtitution of a church in general; ſo, in this text, there are two things that ſhow and ſet forth the good ſtate of any church-member in particular, or of a true Chriſtian; the firſt is, the *receiving of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* the ſecond is, a *walking in him.* And we may conceive theſe two as having a reference to two things mentioned in the preceding verſe, namely, *order* and *ſtedfaſtneſs:* for, as there is no order, but all in confuſion in that ſoul where there is no faith, or receiving of Chriſt; ſo there is no *ſtedfaſtneſs in faith*, where there is no *walking in him.* And as the text ſtands properly connected with the former verſe by the particle THEREFORE; *As ye have* THEREFORE *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him:* From the connexion of theſe two verſes, I ſay, you may obſerve, "That "churches of the beſt conſtitution, both for the order "and ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith, had need to be exhort-"ed to hold faſt their principles and to keep their way." This obſervation, I think, may be obvious to you at the firſt view; it is the ſcope of the apoſtle all along in the chapter to fortify this church againſt ſwerving and declining from the truths of Chriſt; and why does he ſo? even becauſe truth is but *one*, and when received is all reduceable to this one word, *the receiving of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, who is the centre of truth. Truth, I ſay, is but *one*, let all the men of the world ſay what they can

about it, or the ſeveral branches of it, truth is *ſimple* and *one;* but error is *many.* And the apoſtle, in order to fortify them from ſwerving from the truth, offers ſeveral caveats in this chapter.—One is verſe 4. *And this I ſay, leſt any man ſhould beguile you with enticing words:* ENTICING WORDS are the bait wherewith the credulous and ſimple ſort of people are taken; ſuch as the apoſtle notices, Rom. xvi. 17, 18. The ſimple are they that are caught with this bait of enticing words, like merchants that put off ſlight and corrupt wares with the fineſt words.—Another caveat is verſe 8. *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men; after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt:* and as the former is a bait to the ſimple; ſo here is a bait to the more learned, where human philoſophy, and natural reaſonings are ſet in oppoſition to ſcriptural truth, as it is in Chriſt Jeſus.—A third caveat is verſe 16. *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in reſpect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-day.* Where he cautions them againſt all legal ceremonies, the error of Judaizers, and theſe that are ſymbolizers with ceremony-mongers.—A fourth caveat he gives, even to this church of Coloſs, is, verſe 18, 19. *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worſhipping of angels, intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen, vainly puft up with his fleſhly mind: and not holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and hands, having nouriſhment miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* Where the apoſtle cautions againſt ſtrange paradoxes and opinions in religion. Although ſome, for maintaining the faith of their forefathers, have been calumniate as if they were bringing in *new ſchemes* of doctrine *, we could ſhow how ſome, in oppoſition to them, have brought in *ſtrange opinions* that were never before heard tell of in this church; ſuch as, *goſpel-repentance before faith and juſtification;* a new ſcheme and principle that may be charged with not holding the Head, Jeſus Chriſt, and faith in him as the head of all other goſpel graces.

* Theſe who eſpouſed the Marrow doctrine, at this time controverted, were thus unjuſtly accuſed.

Of

Of the like nature is that of maintaining, the *believer's obligation to take the law out of the hand of a God out of Chriſt.* How is this, and many other points that I could name, chargeable with *not holding the Head* Chriſt, *from which all the body by joints and bands, having nouriſhment miniſtred and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God?*—A fifth caveat is againſt all ſuperſtitious ordinances of men, verſe 21, 22, 23. Theſe ſuperſtitious ordinances of men are but a tempting of God, Acts xv. 10. *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of diſciples, which neither we, nor our fathers, were able to bear?* The apoſtle there ſpeaks of legal ceremonies that were inſtituted of God, after they came to be aboliſhed; and the argument is the ſtronger: for, if it was a tempting of God to make uſe of theſe ceremonies that God himſelf had inſtituted of old, then what prodigious tempting of God is it to bring in ſuch a ſuperſtitious and ceremonial ſervice into the worſhip of God, as is intirely of human invention?—In a word, the ſixth caveat is againſt all deviations whatſoever from Chriſt and his truth, and this is the ſcope of the whole chapter: He fortifies them againſt all deviations and declinings; and how does he that? juſt as you would do a houſe that leans to the one ſide; what would you do? ſurely you would labour to get it upright and perpendicular to its foundation: Even ſo, the apoſtle ſtrives to make the church here perpendicular, and upright upon their foundation, and that is Chriſt and his doctrine; exhorting them, under the phraſe of *holding the head*, verſe 19. and getting a *full aſſurance of underſtanding to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God.* And ſo in the text, and immediate context, it is expreſſed by a *walking in him*, a being *rooted* and *built up in him*, and *eſtabliſhed in the faith as ye have been taught.*

The apoſtle here uſeth ſimilitudes; and there are theſe three compariſons couched here. 1. That Chriſt is the *way;* and this is implied in theſe words, *walk ye in him.* 2. That Chriſt is the *root*, and this is implied in theſe words, *rooted in him.* 3. That Chriſt is the *foundation*, and that is implied in theſe words, *built up in him.* Why, ſay you, how can a man ſtand rooted and

and ſtable, and yet walk? Why, you may walk, and yet keep your way ſtedfaſt; you may build, and yet build high in Chriſt; you may be rooted in Chriſt, the true vine, and yet *grow in him.* And hence that emphaſis, in the 6th and 7th verſes, *As ye have received,* and *as ye have been taught.* Why, ſome may think they cannot grow unleſs they change and over-grow their principles, as a child does over-grow his old clothes. But why cannot a man mend his pace, and yet go on in his right path ſtill? Cannot a man build high, and yet build upon the foundation ſtill? Cannot a man *grow in grace,* and in the *knowledge of Chriſt,* and of the truth of Chriſt, and yet grow upon the everlaſting root ſtill? Yea, ſurely: we are to walk as we have received, and to be eſtabliſhed as we have been taught. And here is comfort to believers that are of the loweſt form, ſuch as have no great ſtock of knowledge to trade with in difficult queſtions; here there is comfort, that fundamental points are few and clear; ſo few, that a weak capacity, in any meaſure divinely ſpiritualized, may bear them; and ſo clear, that a dim eye, in any meaſure divinely enlightened, may ſee them. Would you know what is the field where all the flowers of truth grow? it is the word: therefore ſays Chriſt, *Search the ſcriptures, for theſe are they that teſtify of me.* The ſcripture is God's word, God's field; and Chriſt is the treaſure hid in the field: ſearch in that field till you find the treaſure, and then you will find all truth treaſured up in them. Hence the apoſtle, Eph. ii. 20. ſums up all fundamental truths in two words to believers; *Ye are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the head corner-ſtone.* There is the ſum-total of doctrinal fundamentals, or fundamental doctrines. Yea, the very ſame apoſtle hath learned us to ſum up all in one word, πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσι Χριστός, *Chriſt is All, and in all.* God can, with one glance of Chriſt's glory, in the light of his word and Spirit, give you a view of all. Why, the ſcripture is to be believed, becauſe it is inſpired by God, it is a garden of God's planting; but there is a garden within that garden; the goſpel is the paradiſe

paradiſe of the whole ſcripture, and Chriſt is the tree of life in the midſt of that goſpel-paradiſe.

But beſides the doctrinal fundamentals, there are what we may call practical fundamentals, which pertain to the ſtate and being of a true Chriſtian, and theſe are two, and they are both in our text; the one is a *receiving of Chriſt Jeſus*, and the other is a *walking in him*. The former, *viz.* the *receiving of Chriſt*, is neceſſary to the eſſence and being of a Chriſtian; the latter, *viz.* *walking in Chriſt*, is neceſſary to the progreſs, growth, and well-being of a Chriſtian.

Now, in the words, you may notice theſe four things. 1. The believer's *character* and *privilege*; he is one that hath *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*. 2. The believer's *duty*, namely, to *walk in him*. 3. The *rule* of his duty, which is to walk in him *as* he hath received him. 4. The *connexion* betwixt the character and the duty, the one being ſuppoſed to the other, goſpel-faith being the ground of goſpel-practice; no walking in Chriſt unleſs there be a receiving of him: *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

Now, I ſhall, as the Lord may aſſiſt, explain theſe parts of the text in the proſecution of this doctrine.

OBSERV. *That as true believers are theſe that have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord: ſo they ought to walk in him as they have received him.*

The method may be according to the ſeveral parts of the text.

I. To ſpeak of the believer's *character* and *dignity* as a receiver of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.

II. To ſpeak of the believer's *duty*, namely, to walk in Chriſt.

III. To ſpeak of the *rule* of his duty, and the *proportion* it ſhould bear to his reception of Chriſt, namely, that he is to walk in Chriſt *as* he hath received him.

IV. To ſpeak of the *connexion* betwixt the character and the duty, or between receiving Chriſt and walking

walking in him; where we may inquire into the order of this connexion and the reaſon of it.

V. Draw ſome *inferences* for the *application* of the whole.

I. The *firſt* general head is to ſpeak of the believer's *character*, he is one that receiveth Chriſt Jeſus the Lord. *Receiving* Chriſt and *believing* in him are equivolent terms; John i. 12. *To as many as* RECEIVED *him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that* BELIEVE *in his name.* And as they have *power*, or *privilege*, to become the ſons of God by believing in him, or receiving him; ſo they have power to receive him by virtue of their receiving the ſpirit of faith, by the means of the doctrine of faith, or the goſpel-doctrine, Gal. iii. 2. *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*—But that I may ſpeak more cloſely to this point, *the receiving of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, the text leads me to enquire into three things. 1. The *act* of faith as it is a *receiving*. 2. The *object* of it, *Chriſt*. 3. The *capacity*, or *reſpect*, under which this object is received, namely, as he is *Chriſt*, *Jeſus*, *the Lord*. Theſe points being very great and momentuous, I would touch at them ſeverally.

Firſt, The ACT of faith, it is called a *receiving of Chriſt*. Now, to explain this act of receiving Chriſt, as diſtinctly as, through grace, I can, you may notice that it hath ſomething *ſuppoſed* that it relates to, and ſomething *imported* that it conſiſts in.

1*ſt*, It hath ſomething *ſuppoſed* that it relates to. This *receiving* then does refer or relate unto ſome *offer* or *tender* that is made of Chriſt to him that does receive him. For Chriſt is unknown to nature, he is unknown to reaſon, and unknown to the wiſdom of the wiſeſt men upon the earth, until he be revealed and offered, there being no footſteps of the goſpel in the heart or nature of man; whatſoever there may be of the law, there is none of the goſpel. Now, therefore, receiving relates to offering; a receiving-hand hath relation to an offering-hand, holding forth Chriſt to be received, and that is the hand of God's free grace in the diſpenſation of the

the goſpel. And this offer of Chriſt unto ſinners in the goſpel, in order to their being believers, is ſometimes in ſcripture called *a giving of Chriſt*, John iii. 27. *A man can receive nothing unleſs it be given to him from heaven;* and therefore we maintain, that as it is the duty of all that hear this goſpel to receive Chriſt, and believe in him; ſo it is the privilege of all that hear the goſpel, that Chriſt is given to them in the offer thereof. It is true, the giving in *poſſeſſion* follows faith; *My Father giveth you the true bread.* The taking-hand of faith, preſuppoſes the giving-hand of God. God's promiſe in the goſpel is the offering-hand, that offers Chriſt; a ſaving faith of God's operation, is the receiving-hand which goes forth to the hand that offers; and when theſe two hands meet together, then the work is done, there is a receiving. But that you may the better underſtand this point of receiving Chriſt, by conſidering this *offer* that *receiving* relates to, there are three things that may be obſerved. 1. To what kind of *perſons* the goſpel offers Chriſt. 2. Upon what *grounds.* 3. For what *ends.* Mark theſe three then in the offer of Chriſt.

1. To what *kind* of *perſons* the offer is made. To whom doth the hand of the promiſe hold them out? The perſon to whom he is held out is no other than a *loſt ſinner*, a loſt ſoul; *Chriſt came to ſeek and ſave them that were loſt;* I mean not only theſe that are ſenſible of their loſt ſtate, but theſe that are in a loſt ſtate, whether they be ſenſible of it or not: if the goſpel comes to them, the offer of Chriſt comes to them: *To you, O men, do I call; and my voice is to the ſons of men.* We are warranted to *preach the goſpel to every rational creature,* Mark xvi. 15. The offer of Chriſt comes to you. Why, may not *ſin* exclude us from the offer? By no means; for, *Chriſt came to ſave ſinners,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. If ſinners were excepted, all mankind would be excepted; for, *all have ſinned.* But is it to *groſs ſinners?* Yea, Iſa. i. 18. *Come let us reaſon together,—though your iniquities were like ſcarlet, I will make them white as ſnow; though they be red, like crimſon, I will make them as wool;* —to murderers of the Lord of glory was the offer made,

Acts ii. 41. But are *mockers* and *ſcorners* under the offer? Yea, they are, as you ſee, Prov. i. 22, 23. But what if a perſon cares not for the offer, and thinks himſelf happy enough without Chriſt, and believes himſelf well enough as he is without him; is the offer of Chriſt to ſuch? Certainly it is; *Wherefore do you ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs,* Iſa. lv. 1, 2. But if a man be neither convinced of ſin or miſery, nor ſee any need of Chriſt, is Chriſt offered to him? Yea, undoubtedly he is; Rev. iii. 18. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment that thou mayeſt be cloathed.* Let them venture to ſhut the door of the goſpel-offer who will, we muſt open it in God's name to all who hear this goſpel, and tell them that Chriſt is offered to them, that he may be received by them; and if there were no offer, it would not be their duty to receive, and ſo unbelief would not be their ſin.—Again, let them ſhift the offer of the goſpel who will, and think Chriſt is not offered to them, this offer will riſe up in judgment againſt them, if they do not anſwer it; for, *he that believeth not, ſhall be damned:* and one of two ſhall take place upon this univerſal offer, either ye ſhall receive him as offered, or ye ſhall all be made inexcuſable that receive him not: I am pretty ſure, though we reach not the firſt, yet the ſecond ſhall take place, though I ſhould ſay no more than I have ſaid. The goſpel-offer does not tell *who will* come; for many get the offer who will never receive the gift offered to them: but it tells *who ſhould* come, and that is *all:* but though all ſhould come, whether they be ſenſible of their loſt ſtate or not: yet theſe that ſee themſelves loſt, are in the faireſt way to receive the offer of a Saviour; and none will come till God make them ſee themſelves loſt and undone without Chriſt, as all of you are loſt indeed, though few are ſenſible of their loſt ſtate. However, I ſay to loſt ſouls, Chriſt is offered to theſe that are ſpoiled by the ſentence of the law, arraigned, convicted, condemned, and accurſed; the hand of the goſpel promiſe holds out Chriſt

to

to you; for, where Moſes leaves you, there Joſhua finds you; where the law ends, there the goſpel begins: the law ends in the ſhipwreck of the ſinner, in ſpliting him upon the rock of its terrors and curſes, drowning him in the ocean of divine wrath, and ſinking him into the depths of deſpair; and juſt there the goſpel begins; it comes to the bottom of the pit of ſin and miſery, and offers a Chriſt, a Saviour. Thus, where Moſes leaves you, there Joſhua finds you. When the law ends Chriſt begins; and when the ſoul is ſo ſhipwrecked by the law, that he is, as it were, all to pieces, to ſuch an one is the goſpel-offer moſt welcome; for the hand of grace holds forth Chriſt, like a plank after ſhipwreck, a plank to ſwim aſhore upon. Such a ſoul is encouraged to ſee no other qualification required of him to come to Chriſt, and receive him, but juſt that he is loſt, which he finds himſelf to be; and there is no other condition or qualification required, but that you be a loſt man, a ſinful miſerable perſon. Some will offer Chriſt upon ſuch and ſuch terms, ſaying, you muſt be ſo and ſo *humbled*, ſo and ſo *penitent*, before Chriſt can be offered to you; ſo that a man that finds himſelf a loſt, ſinful, unhumbled, impenitent, wretched creature, can never come to their hand, or meddle with what they offer: juſt like a man holding out a cup of excellent wine to his friend, and offering him a drink, but in the mean time he hath made the wine ſcalding hot upon the fire, ſo as the man, to whom it is offered, dare not touch it with his lips: even ſo, many offer Chriſt, and hold forth the cup of ſalvation to the people, but they heat their goſpel-liquor, as it were, red hot upon the fire of the law; I mean, with ſo many legal terms, conditions, and qualifications, that the poor ſoul, that finds himſelf a loſt ſinner, every way ſinful, deſtitute of all good qualifications, dare not come near, and thinks he may not, he ought not to come near with his lip to taſte it. We need be at no pains to hinder ſinners from coming to Chriſt, to receive the offer, for they are unwilling enough of themſelves. Beſides that, they will never have a good qualification till they come to him and receive him, and all good in him; all grace and glory, all holineſs and happineſs.—Thus

you ſee to what *kind* of *perſons* the offer of Chriſt is made, which the receiving of Chriſt doth relate to.

2. Upon what *ground* is the offer made? or, what is the ground upon which Chriſt is offered? To this I anſwer, only in general, It is juſt upon the ground of free grace; ſovereign grace in Chriſt crucified. And hence the goſpel is called by the name of GRACE, Tit. ii. 11. *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation hath appeared to all men;* or, as in the margin, *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation to all men:* it brings the offer of Chriſt, and ſo of ſalvation to all men to whom the goſpel comes; and it is grace that does it, without the conſideration of any condition, or qualification in us. Sovereign grace is a thing that can neither be promoted by our goodneſs, or hindered by our badneſs. Free grace, that makes the offer, looks neither to the worthineſs, nor unworthineſs of the receiver; neither to his merit, nor demerit; neither to the merit of his virtue, nor the demerit of his vice. It is the hand of the promiſe that offers Chriſt to the loſt ſinner, upon the ground of free grace alone: and here is the moſt inviting encouragement to a loſt ſinner that can be, that as he hath no worthineſs to plead for him, [which if he had, grace would be no grace;] ſo his unworthineſs is no bar againſt him; for, if it were, then grace would be no grace alſo in this reſpect: for if your worthineſs did work it, then it would not be the work of grace; or, if your unworthineſs did hinder it, then it would not be the doing of grace: yea, grace would never do any thing at all; for all are unworthy. Here there is encouragement to all ſinners to receive an offered Chriſt. But what is the obſtruction? Why, when a man ſhould take hold of Chriſt, then his heart goes about to mar the freedom of grace, before he dare venture his ſoul upon it; and how is that? Even by ſeeking ſome qualifications in himſelf that Chriſt ſhould be offered unto him: why, I ſhould be ſo and ſo holy, before I meddled with Chriſt; ſo and ſo humble and penitent, before I reckon the goſpel-offer belongs to me. Thus a man naturally would be looking after ſomething in himſelf, and he would gladly find it, that he may thus build the goſpel upon the law;

law; God upon the man; Chriſt upon ſelf; and free grace upon works; for it is no better than ſo: and thus the ſoul will not come to free grace; he will be obſtructing himſelf; and in this mire he lies till free grace teach him how to come to the market of free grace, *without money, and without price;* till then all is but nothing: the ground of the offer is free and ſovereign grace. What a great deal of latent obſtructions are there that hinder our receiving this offer of Chriſt made by free grace! Why, when a loſt ſinner comes ever to find himſelf a loſt ſinner, then he ſtands aback, becauſe he thinks either he is too much loſt, or too little loſt. Either,

(1.) He thinks he is *too much loſt*, his ſins are ſo very great; and ſo the man ſecretly ſays, that he would buy his pardon with his own goodneſs, if he had it, and will not be obliged to free grace for it; or by this means he magnifies the demerit of his ſins, above the merit of the blood of Chriſt, which is a great affront poured upon the infinitely glorious bargain that is in his offer. Or,

(2.) He thinks he is *too little loſt*, his ſenſe of ſin and humiliation is ſo very little; and this is another obſtruction. He would be more broken and more humbled before he thinks the offer belongs to him; and this ſhews the fulneſs of his heart, that though he thinks he cannot buy Chriſt at the goſpel market, with his good works, yet he would buy and purchaſe Chriſt with his humiliation, deep down-caſting, and the like. Now, this cannot be, it is but a rotten excuſe; for, what though you ſhould ſink as far into the deeps of legal conviction, as deſpair itſelf; yet, will that deſpair merit any thing at the hand of God, or yet make God better pleaſed with him? No: to deſpair is to diſpleaſe him, as well as to preſume. And as you cannot preſume, if you come to take him in the tenor of our text, namely, as a *Chriſt*, as a *Jeſus*, as a *Lord*, (of which afterwards;) ſo you cannot deſpair, if you know that the ground of the offer is free grace. Would you be humbled to deſpair in yourſelf, and of all your excellencies, and of recommending yourſelf to God by any good, any humility of yours, it were a good deſpair; but if you would

would be humbled for ſin, ſo far as to expect thereupon the favour of God, and forgiveneſs of ſin, this can never be. But here a queſtion may be propoſed, *What meaſure of humiliation ſhould I have?* We anſwer, So much humiliation as makes you ſee your want of humiliation, your want of all good, all grace, all conditions, and qualifications; ſo much as ſhall oblige you to relinquiſh your own fancied goodneſs, and make you come to Chriſt for all, and accept of him upon goſpel terms, and the term of the goſpel is free grace. I will tell you, by a compariſon the true level of humiliation: when is the metal ſufficiently melted in the fire? It may be burnt in the fire, and it may be melted too little; but when is it enough? Why, it appears to be melted enough when it runs eaſily into the mould: but now, it is not the melting that gives it the ſhape, the form, or faſhion; but the melting makes it run into the mould, and the mould gives it the form or ſhape: ſo I ſay here, When is the ſoul melted enough? It is when it runs into the goſpel mould. There are ſome that have, as it were, too much of the fire; there are theſe that apprehend themſelves ſuch great ſinners that they dare not come to Chriſt. There are others that have too little of the fire; theſe are they that only think they are not ſo good as they ought to be, and therefore they ſhould not come. There are others that have nothing of the fire at all; and theſe are they that think they are good enough already, and they need not come to receive Chriſt. But then only is the ſoul melted enough in the fire, when it runs into the mould. What is the goſpel mould? It is even Chriſt. And when the melted ſoul, like melted lead, or other metal, runs into this mould, then, and not till then, does it get a good ſhape: it is not the melting that gives it the ſhape or faſhion, or form, but it is the mould that gives the form. And ſo never expect to have any good form, any good ſhape, any good qualification, till your ſoul run in to this mould, by *receiving Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, thus offered to you upon the ground of free grace.—And thus you ſee the *ground* of the offer.

3. For what *end* is the offer made? Why, Chriſt is offered

offered to the loſt ſinner, upon the ground of free grace, to be both a *Jeſus* and a *Lord*. As he is to be *received* as ſuch, (of which we may afterwards ſpeak,) ſo he is *offered* as ſuch, even as a Saviour and a Lord; that is, he hath coupled the ſalvation of Chriſt, and the dominion of Chriſt together; and it ſhows that all whom he ſaves he will ſanctify; that whom he ſaves by the price of his blood, he will conquer by the power of his Spirit; he being the Chriſt of God, Anointed of God, Sealed of God, to be both a Saviour and a Lord; and he is offered for this end to be both. This ſhews what a ſuitable offer it is to the poor ſinner that is both under the wrath of God, the curſe of the law, condemned to hell-fire, which makes him ſtand in need of Chriſt as a Saviour; and alſo, he is under the power of ſin, the ſlavery of luſts, the bondage of Satan, which makes him ſtand in need of Chriſt as a Lord; and here is encouragement to the poor ſoul, that would be ſanctified as well as juſtified, Chriſt is offered for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption: he is not offered as a Saviour only, to ſave from hell; but as a Lord alſo, to deliver from ſin. Now, what is the great obſtruction here, that hinders the receiving of the offer? Why, it is even the falſe heart that would divide ſalvation from dominion; would be content to have his ſoul ſaved, but not to have the ſin conquered; would have Chriſt as a Jeſus, but not as a Lord: the man would be under his garment, and yet not under his government. In this caſe, the man is not ſo much out of love with ſin, as out of love with hell; not ſo much in love with Chriſt, as with his benefits: while his guilt craves Chriſt's ſalvation, his luſts oppoſe Chriſt's Lordſhip. If Chriſt were offered as a cloak to your luſts, then the falſe and bloody calumny of ſome would be true, that we call men to believe, and then live as they liſt. Why, if Chriſt were offered as a Jeſus, a Saviour, and not as a Lord, then ſuch a thing might be ſuppoſed; but let the mouth of calumny be ſtopt: we offer Chriſt to ſinners, upon the ground of free grace, both as he is a Jeſus and a Lord; and I defy any man in the world to receive this offer, and yet deſire to live as he liſts. It is not poſſible in nature: For if the language of man's heart

heart be, *Lord let my ſoul be ſaved, but let my luſts reign;* in this caſe the offer is not received; for then the man ſays, Let me have Chriſt as a Saviour, but not as a Lord: and ſo, the offer not being received, it is not faith, but a fancy, a deluſion; for, at the ſame time that he deſires ſuch a latitude, he refuſes the offer of Chriſt as a Lord; yea, and betrays the rottenneſs of his faith in him as a Saviour, while he would divide ſalvation from dominion, and Chriſt's prieſthood from his lordſhip.

When God brings a man therefore to receive his offer in the goſpel, he makes him to paſs under three convictions, which three you read of, John xvi. 8. *When the Spirit is come, he will convince the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment.* 1. He paſſes under the conviction of *ſin;* both of his general ſin, in rebelling againſt and contemning the authority of a commanding God in the law; and of his particular ſin of unbelief, in deſpiſing the grace of a promiſing God in the goſpel. 2. He paſſes under the conviction of *righteouſneſs;* that is, of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt as a Saviour, a Prieſt, a Sacrifice, and as the *Lord our righteouſneſs*, for juſtification: he is convinced that he is loſt for ever without an intereſt in this righteouſneſs. 3. He paſſes under the conviction of *judgment;* that is, of the government of Chriſt; making the man willing to be ſubject to him, as well as juſtified by him; to be under the dominion of his grace, as well as under the covert of his blood. Now, till a man have paſſed theſe three convictions, he is ſtill blocked up, and concluded under unbelief.

There are two things, which when they do appear, tend mightily to draw out the heart toward the goſpel-offer; the one is in us, the other is in Chriſt. The firſt is, the neceſſity of the ſinner; and the ſecond is, the excellency of the Saviour. The neceſſity of having Chriſt upon pain of death, and the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt. The one makes the man willing to be ſaved by him; the other makes the man willing to be ſubdued by him. Such is my neceſſity; Oh I muſt have him for a Jeſus to me! Such is his excellency; Oh I muſt have him for a Lord to me! And thus he is brought to go in

to

to the proper ends of the goſpel-offer, namely, to receive Chriſt as Jeſus the Lord.

Thus I have ſhewed you ſomewhat relative to the offer which this *receiving of Chriſt* relates to. And from this manner of offering Chriſt, it appears, that though the offer be to ſinners, and grounded upon free grace, yet what a hard thing, yea, how impoſſible it is, without the almighty power of God, to receive the offer, or to believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. What a mighty hard work it is, when there are ſuch obſtructions in the way! Many think it is an eaſy thing to be believers; and ſo it may be ſaid indeed of a multitude of ordinary, ſuperficial, dogmatical believers in the world. But ſaving faith, though it be the eaſieſt and ſweeteſt thing in the world, under the conduct of divine grace, and the drawings of the divine Spirit, yet, without that, it is the hardeſt thing in the world. Why?

1. For a loſt ſinner, under the curſe of the law, to believe that God ſhould be as good to him, as the promiſe of the goſpel tells him, is hard; nay, he is afraid the promiſe be too good to be true, and this argues his want of faith; for whatever unbelief does, faith never queſtions the truth of God's promiſe.

2. For a proud man to be beholden to free grace, when he hath been building his hope all his days upon ſome good work or deed of his own; for ſuch a ſinner to ſtript himſelf of his own righteouſneſs, and look upon it as a filthy rag; how hard is this! nay, publicans and harlots go to heaven ſooner.

3. For a ſinner filled with ſelf-love, ſelf-eaſe, ſelf-will, ſelf-wiſdom, ſelf-ſufficiency, ſelf-eſtimation, ſelf-juſtification, to deny himſelf, his ſinful ſelf, his natural ſelf, moral ſelf, worldly ſelf, religious ſelf, and go wholly out of himſelf, and wholly in to Chriſt for all; all this is very hard: and yet for this end Chriſt is offered that he may be thus received, even for *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification*, *redemption*, and all; for *wiſdom*, that is, as a Prophet to teach you; for *righteouſneſs*, that is, as a Prieſt to juſtify you; for *ſanctification*, that is, as a King to ſanctify you; and for compleat redemption, that is, for your *all in all;* even the whole of your ſalvation,

in time and through eternity. Now, the hardneſs and difficulty of believing and accepting of this noble offer, does not ly in ſome great work that you have not power to do, for faith and works are oppoſite here; believing is not working; *He that believeth, is he that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifies the ungodly*, Rom. iv. 5.: but the difficulty rather lies in ſome great worth, and apprehend good, that you have no will to quit, till a day of power make you willing; ſuch as, your own wit and wiſdom, which you oppoſe unto Chriſt as a Prophet; your own works and righteouſneſs, which you oppoſe unto Chriſt as a Prieſt; your own ſtrength and power, together with your own ſelf-love and ſin-love, which you oppoſe unto Chriſt as a King. In receiving this offer, the man not only quits his ſin and luſt, which is very hard; but quits his righteouſneſs and works, which is yet harder. Need I to explain this, for preventing miſtakes, in this critical age and day of reproach? When I ſpeak of quitting our works; I mean, a quitting them, not in point of *performance*, but in point of *dependence;* it is a quitting of the law, not as a rule of *obedience*, but as a rule of *acceptance*, or as a *covenant of works*. Now, I ſay, it is the hardeſt of all for a man to quit his works and righteouſneſs, and have no hope of any favour or acceptance with God for them; for the light of nature will tell him, that he ſhould quit his ſins; but the light of nature, and the remainders of the legal covenant in him, will never tell him that he ſhould quit his works and righteouſneſs; nay, it will tell him, on the quite contrary, that he muſt *do, or be damned;* that he muſt *do and live;* and work ſo and ſo well, and God will accept of him. This is the way of the covenant of works, the natural way; and to quit that way is right hard, ſo as to venture all upon the works of another, the righteouſneſs of another: Indeed it is not ſo hard for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, with his bunch of his back, as for a rich man; I mean, one that is rich in his own conceit, *rich and increaſed with goods, and ſtanding in need of nothing;* nay, it is impoſſible for him with his bunch of duties and works of righteouſneſs on his back, to enter into heaven. Some by the *needle-*

eye

eye underſtand the wicket of the gate of Jeruſalem, no camel with his burden could go in; ſo it is here. Others, by the *camel*, underſtand a *cart-rope*, as they think the word we tranſlate *camel* may be rendered; and as a cart-rope cannot go through the eye of a needle, unleſs it be untwiſted, and put through the needle's eye, thread by thread; neither will any get to heaven, unleſs the cart-rope of his righteouſneſs be untwiſted and diſſolved piece-meal; for otherwiſe his cart-rope will be fit for nothing, but caſting anchor on the ſandy bank of the law, where his veſſel will be broken to pieces, and his ſoul will ſink into the ſea of God's wrath: for, *By the deeds of the law, no fleſh living can be juſtified.*

So that, I ſay, the difficulty here lies not ſo much in ſome great thing that you have not *power* to do, but in ſome great thing that you have not *will* to undo: and ſo the greateſt knack of true religion lies in being made willing; and the great power of God is neceſſary for that end; *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power;* and when this day of power comes, then, to receive the offer of Chriſt for the ends for which he is offered, becomes as eaſy as ever before it was hard; why, the offer takes hold of the mans's heart, and the offering hand takes hold of the receiving hand: like a child, that never had a pen in his hand, and cannot write a word, the father takes the child's hand within his, and leads it; ſo here, the Lord takes the man's hand, and leads it to write down his name, to ſign the offer, ſaying, *I accept*

Now, what ſhall we ſay? Is there any here to whom the offer is come with power? The external diſpenſation of this goſpel, and revelation of this offer, make it the unqueſtionable duty of every one of you to accept and receive it; but it is the internal effectual revelation of it only, that will determine you actually to accept and receive it freely, *without money, and without price:* without terms and conditions on your ſide; renouncing all the good qualifications you dreamed of having to recommend you to him, and coming to him for all; like a black and ugly monſter coming to accept of an offer that can make you fair and clean. It is an offer of all

things in Chriſt; and nothing makes it hard and uneaſy but yourſelf, that you will not quit an *all*, that is *nothing*, and take an *all*, that is *all things*. The natural man finds it hard, becauſe it is a quitting all the good that he has; but the enlightened ſoul finds it eaſy, becauſe it is juſt a taking all the good that he wants; and when he is taking all things in Chriſt, he does not find it hard to quit all in himſelf: why, he ſees *all things loſs and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt;* and when he ſees that, he finds it is not hard to relinquiſh a heap of jewels, and a pearl of infinitely great price in the midſt of them. O! is there any here welcoming God's offer? Here is his offering hand, where is your receiving hand? Here is the hand of grace offering, where is the hand of faith accepting? Is any here taking God's offer off his hand? Do you ſee the offer is to you; to you, man; to you woman; whether young or old? *To you is the word of this ſalvation ſent.* The greater gift it is that is offered to you, the leſs will you be ready to take, as long as you think, it cannot be to me. But to you, I ſay, it is, man, woman; whoever you are, *the promiſe is to you;* the offer is to you, be who you will.—Now, are you receiving, are you taking God's offer? Why, if you be doing ſo, it is eaſy, through grace, to know that you are doing ſo. How do you know when you are taking a gift that a man offers you, in an outward ſenſe? The man holds it out in his hand, ſaying, Take it; and if you receive, then you hold out your hand to his, ſaying, Content, I will take it: or, if your hand be ſhort, and cannot reach his, yet you will hold it out in teſtimony of your acceptance, ſaying, Well, come and give it. So here, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, if you be taking God's offer off his hand, then your heart will be determined to ſay, Content, Lord; even ſo I take the unſpeakable gift that thou offereſt: or, if your hand be ſhort, or withered, that you think you cannot get the offer embraced as you would, yet you will be ſtretching out heart and hand as you can, ſaying, Come, Lord, and give what thou offereſt; even a whole Chriſt to be wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, redemption, and all to me. O! is this the lan-

guage

guage of your ſoul, I have nothing, but let Chriſt come and be all to me; I can do nothing, but let Chriſt come and do all for me; I have a world of ſelf-enmity, and innumerable evils, that oppoſe Chriſt within me, but let Chriſt come in and put all to the door that hold him out; I cannot take him, but let him take me, and take my bleſſing for ever? Why, if that were the language of your heart and ſoul, I hope there hath been ſome ſecret power working in you to make you thus far to receive the offer of God.——And thus I have conſidered the offer which the receiving of Chriſt relates unto. Now, I told you that as to this act of *receiving* we would conſider what it *relates to*, and what it *conſiſts* in. Having then ſhewed what it relates to, namely, the offer, I come to ſhew,

2*dly*, What it *conſiſts in*. Here I need not tell you, that *receiving* and *believing* are all one, according to John i. 12.; and this believing is not a mere notional perſuaſion, or dogmatical opinion concerning Chriſt; for that is too ſlight a thing to be accounted a receiving of Chriſt: but this receiving of Chriſt,

(1.) *In general*, to expreſs it in a word, if poſſible, it may be called (as one of our renowned commentators expreſſes it) a *fiducial knowledge*; that is, ſuch a knowledge of Chriſt as leads the ſoul to an aſſured confidence in him. Our Shorter Catechiſm defines faith to be, a *receiving of Chriſt, and reſting on him, for ſalvation, as he is offered in the goſpel.* And this *reſting* is not ſo much a different act from that of *receiving*, as it is a continuation of that act of receiving; for when we receive him for ſalvation we begin our reſting on him; and when we reſt upon him for ſalvation, we continue our receiving of him, or believing in him. The reception, is the reſt begun; and the reſting, is the reception continued. And therefore whatever application of Chriſt is imported in *reſting on him*, the ſame is imported in *receiving of him.* And as Chriſt is offered to every one in particular, that hear the goſpel; ſo it is the duty of every one to receive the offer by applying Chriſt to himſelf, for his own particular good, benefit, and ſalvation. I could here lay before you ſeveral terms or expreſſions whereby this faith,

or

or receiving of Chriſt, is held forth in the ſcripture, but I confine myſelf to the text. Receiving of Chriſt is, "a "going out of the whole ſoul, to cloſe with Chriſt for "complete ſalvation to a man's ſelf, as he is offered in "the goſpel;" and ſo the language of faith is, Here is an offer made by God to me myſelf; and therefore I receive Chriſt for ſalvation to myſelf, according to the offer, and that with my whole heart and ſoul; for, *With the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs: My heart truſted in him, and I am helped*, ſaid the pſalmiſt. Some make faith to be only an act of the *will*, that they may exclude from the nature of faith that perſuaſion which yet cannot be excluded. In oppoſition to ſuch we aſſert, That, according to ſcripture, faith is an act of the *whole ſoul*; the *underſtanding*, *will*, and *affections*: and hence theſe, and the like ſcriptures, make faith to be an act of the ſoul, Pſalm lvii. 2. *O my God, my ſoul truſteth in thee.* Pſalm xvi. 2. *O my ſoul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord. O my ſoul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. My ſoul maketh her boaſt in the Lord. My ſoul thirſteth for the living God. Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul.* All eminent expreſſions of faith. Now, I ſay, this receiving of Chriſt is the ſoul's cloſing with him; the ſoul's going out toward him; or going in to him as offered, ſo as to become one with him. As you ſee how grafts are knit to the ſtock, ſo as to become one with the ſtock, and one in the ſtock, or elſe it cannot live in a vegetative manner; ſo the ſoul is by faith knite and unite to Chriſt, the root, to be one with him, and one in him: for true faith ſo cloſes with Chriſt, as not merely to have a Chriſt without the man, but a Chriſt within him; and therefore the ſoul, by faith, goes in to Chriſt, ſo as not only to unload his debt, and leave his ſin and guilt upon him, but alſo to ſurrender himſelf into his poſſeſſion and property.

But that I may further open up this *act* of receiving Chriſt, I would,

(2.) And *more particularly* conſider the nature thereof, in the following *qualities* of it.

1. This act of receiving Chriſt is a *ſpiritual* act, in oppoſition to all natural acts done by natural wit and ſtrength:

ſtrength: men may believe that way with a cradle faith, a natural faith, a common faith, and believe unto perdition; but will never believe to the ſaving of their ſouls. True faith is a ſpiritual act, under the conduct of the Spirit of faith; and therefore faith is called a *fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. v. 22.; and of the power of the Spirit, even *the exceeding greatneſs of his mighty power*, Eph. i. 19. It is a fruit and effect of the day of God's power, and the revelation of his arm, Iſa. liii. 1. It is the *gift of God*, and a fruit of his free grace; and hence we read of ſome that *through grace believed*, Acts xviii. 27. The power of the Spirit of Chriſt creates it where it is not; and that ſame power of the Spirit excites it where it is. It is a ſpiritual act.

2. This act of receiving Chriſt is a *judicious* act, in oppoſition to darkneſs and confuſion. The man being acted by the Spirit of faith doth act judiciouſly and diſtinctly, as in a matter of the greateſt concern, with judgment and underſtanding, ſaying, as John vi. 68. *To whom ſhall we go, thou haſt the words of eternal life? We believe and are ſure, that thou art that Chriſt, the Son of the living God.* The man believes the promiſe, and the doctrine of grace and ſalvation ſo judiciouſly, that, as his judgment approves it as a *truth*, ſo the will accepts it as a *good; This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am the chief*, 1 Tim. i. 15.

3. This act of receiving Chriſt is a *warrantable* act, in oppoſition to preſumption and deluſion. True faith acts upon a ſufficient warrant. It acts upon the warrant of an *objective ſufficiency*; there is a ſufficient Chriſt preſented to him. O the ſufficiency of his perſon, being God-man, in one perſon! the ſufficiency of his offices, whether his general offices, as a Mediator, a Surety, a Redeemer; or his particular offices, as a Prophet, Prieſt, and King: the ſufficiency of his righteouſneſs, his doing and dying, his obedience and ſatisfaction; the ſufficiency of his power, being *able to ſave to the uttermoſt*; the ſufficiency of his will, while he proclaims his *good-will towards men*, and that *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*. Beſides, faith acts upon the

the warrant of a general diſpenſation of grace, through Chriſt, in the external revelation of the word, where the elect are not characterized more than others, but life and ſalvation through Chriſt held out to ſinners of mankind, without diſtinction of nation, ſtate, or condition, and ſo in an indefinite way. Thus run all the promiſes, except theſe that are made to believers, or ſuch as have grace already; to them indeed the promiſes are definite, as alſo they are definite to the elect in the purpoſe of God; but in the external diſpenſation of the goſpel, they are indefinite and general, Acts ii. 32. Rom. ix. 4. And as the promiſe is indefinite, ſo the call is univerſal, whether by exhortations, invitations, counſels, or commands, to all and every one to come and receive Chriſt, and all his ſure mercies, freely. And upon ſuch-like warrants as theſe does faith act.

4. This act of receiving Chriſt, it is an *adventuring* act, in oppoſition to diſpondency, diffidence, and diſtruſt: hence it is called a *boldneſs; We have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus.* It is a venturing our ſouls, our life, upon the blood of the Son of God, and upon the promiſe of God in Chriſt. To receive Chriſt, and believe, is in effect to ſay, I adventure my ſoul upon nothing in the world, but upon the promiſe of a God that I have provoked, and been an enemy to all my days; I have nothing but the word of this God, and yet I muſt venture upon it my everlaſting all. It is an adventuring grace, like Peter upon the boiſterous water, with this in his mouth and heart, *Maſter, ſave me*, Matth. xiv. 30. To venture upon the promiſe of a provoked God, and to believe him to be a God in Chriſt reconciled, according to his word, upon the account of the *ranſom he hath found out*, and the *propitiation he hath ſet forth;* here is the boldneſs of faith. It is a venturing act.

5. This act of receiving Chriſt, it is an *evangelical* act, in oppoſition to a legal faith. It is evangelical in the ground of it: legal faith acts upon the ground of a legal inherent ſtrength, and perſonal righteouſneſs; but true faith upon a borrowed ſtrength, and an imputed righteouſneſs of another, ſaying, *Surely in the Lord only*

only have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength; and it is a ſelf-emptying grace, ſtripping the man of his own righteouſneſs, of his own ſtrength, and taking him intirely off his own bottom. It is evangelical in the order of it, receiving him as a *Jeſus*, and then as a *Lord;* firſt for juſtification: legal faith perverts that goſpel-order, ſeeking ſanctification firſt, that upon that bottom it may build its juſtification; *Seeking righteouſneſs, as it were, by the works of the law*, Rom. ix. 32. It is evangelical in its fruit; legal faith is a fruitleſs faith, it brings forth no acceptable fruit, either from a right principle or to a right end; and ſo all its fruits of good works are rejected, as unprofitable and vain: but true faith brings virtue and good from its object; ſuch as, eaſe to the conſcience, quiet to the mind, holineſs to the heart, and holy luſtre to the whole life: when faith touches, if it were but the hem of Chriſt's garment, virtue comes out, and heals the ſoul; grace comes forth, and purifies the heart; yea, it brings forth all the good fruit of goſpel-grace; *Out of his fulneſs have we all received, and grace for grace*, John i. 16. Faith is the receiving grace, and other graces are received by it; it fetches them out of Chriſt's fulneſs; it brings out repentance, and then it is a penitential faith: goſpel repentance is in it, and with it, and after it, but not before it. As true faith is a penitent faith; even ſo it is a humble faith, a joyful faith, a thankful faith, an obediential faith, a working faith; yea, faith is the root of all theſe fruits that natively grow upon it, and go along with it.

6. This act of receiving Chriſt, it is a *particular, appropriating, fiducial* act, in oppoſition to the general doubtſome faith of the Papiſts, which we have abjured in our National Covenant. The man that believes, truly believes *applicatively*. The man that receives Chriſt rightly, receives him with a particular appropriation to himſelf; juſt as a man eats and drinks for his own particular benefit; and hence faith is called an *eating of the fleſh, and drinking of the blood of the Son of God;* that is, he takes home Chriſt, his merit, righteouſneſs, mediation, and the benefits thereof to his own ſoul. And thus it is alſo a *fiducial* act, importing an aſſured confi-

dence, according to the meaſure of it, in oppoſition to an uncertain faith. A doubtſome, wavering faith, is not the faith that receives Chriſt; nay, it is a faith that receives nothing, if we will take God's word for it, James i. 5, 6, 7. *If any man lack wiſdom, let him aſk it of God;—but let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the ſea, driven with the wind and toſſed; for let not that man think that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord.* Why then, a doubtſome faith receives nothing, far leſs ſuch a prize as Chriſt. I know how ſome have been reproached on this head, notwithſtanding of this plain ſcriptural doctrine, as if they aſſerted, that they had no pity upon doubting believers. Really we ſhould have no pity upon ourſelves if we ſhould ſay, that no believers have their doubts. Well, ſay you, may not a man that hath faith have doubts? Yea, to be ſure he may; but his doubts are not his faith, but his unbelief; and who ever ſaid but a believer may have much unbelief? I would aſk ſuch perſons, May not a man that hath grace, have corruption? And yet you will own that his corruption is none of his grace; nay, it is the direct oppoſite of grace: even ſo, a man that hath faith may have doubts, but yet his doubts are not his faith; but his ſin, his unbelief, and the quite oppoſite of faith: there is no doubting in his faith, even as there is no corruption in grace; they are antipodes. And it is not by his doubting, but by his believing, that he receives any thing from God. The Lord deliver us from juſtifying a doubtful faith which Chriſt reproves; *O thou of little faith, wherefore doſt thou doubt?* Some make doubting a mark of faith; but it is ſuch a mark of faith as corruption is a mark of grace, as in the following ſenſe; Why, ſay you, there is a notorious profligate ſinner, that ſays he never doubted all his days, but ſtill had a good hope; that is indeed a ſign that he hath no faith: whereas the poor ſoul that finds a world of doubts may yet be a true believer. Very true; and therefore I ſay it is ſuch a mark as corruption is a mark of grace, in this ſenſe; there is an impenitent wretch that ſays he never ſaw what they call corruption within him all his days; nay, he bleſſes God he is a good Chriſtian, a good

good neighbour, and hath always had a good heart to God; there is an evidence that he hath no grace: whereas the poor ſoul that finds corruption working, and ſin raging within him, may yet be a true ſaint. Thus as corruption felt may be a mark of grace, becauſe grace fights againſt corruption; even ſo, doubting felt may be a mark of faith, becauſe faith fights againſt doubting, and oppoſes it, as being quite contrary to its very nature. But will any therefore put doubting into the nature of faith, as if it were eſſential to faith to doubt? Or, will any therefore exclude perſuaſion from the nature of faith, as if it were not eſſential for faith to be perſuaded, becauſe the man that hath faith is ſometimes doubting? Juſt as if it were not in the nature of the eye to ſee, becauſe the man that hath eyes is ſometimes ſleeping: nay, we ſay, it is in the nature of faith to ſee, and be aſſured, and perſuaded, becauſe it is a fiducial act; hence theſe and the like ſcriptures, Rom. iv. 20, 21. *He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God, through unbelief, but was ſtrong in the faith, giving glory to God; being* FULLY PERSUADED, *that he that had promiſed was able to perform.* And Heb. xi. 13. it is ſaid of all the old-teſtament believers, to whom notwithſtanding the revelation of the object of faith was not ſo clearly made as under the New-Teſtament, that they *received the promiſes:* well, but what ſort of an act was that receiving act of theirs? Why, it follows, *they were* PERSUADED *of them, and embraced them.*

The common ſenſe of mankind uſually takes faith, or believing, for a *perſuaſion:* I believe ſuch a thing; that is, I am *perſuaded*, or aſſured of it; I do not doubt it: I believe ſuch a man; that is, I am *perſuaded* it is truth that he ſays: if the honeſt man give me his word, his oath, his bond, this fortifies the perſuaſion, and certifies the perſon that hath ado with him. So here, to believe, is to be perſuaded, aſſured, and certified upon the word, the oath, the bond, the promiſe, the covenant, yea, the blood and righteouſneſs of God; and he that believeth upon ſuch a ground, as all true believers do, muſt believe with perſuaſion, according to the meaſure of faith: if it be a weak faith, it is a weak per-

if a ſtrong faith, a ſtrong perſuaſion. And it is not a natural perſuaſion, a man's perſuading himſelf, and ſo on more of it; nay, it is ſupernatural, and comes of God, which the former does not; Gal. iv. 8. *This perſuaſion cometh not of him that calleth you;* intimating, that right perſuaſion cometh of God.

This act of receiving Chriſt then is a *fiducial* act, a *fiducial perſuaſion*, which ſome call a *fiducial aſſurance*. I know that one great ground of miſtake in this point is, the confounding of *fiducial* aſſurance with *evidential* aſſurance. The former is the aſſurance of faith, and in the nature of it; the latter is the aſſurance of ſenſe, and the effect of faith; and is not properly faith at all, but ſenſe:—They differ in their *acts;* by fiducial aſſurance, we *receive* Chriſt as ours; by evidential aſſurance, we *know* him to be ours: the former every believer hath, when he acts faith; the latter, many believers want, even when they act faith; becauſe, though they may be conſcious that they are acting, yet they may not be conſcious of the quality of the act, if it is ſaving or not.—Again, this fiducial and evidential aſſurance differ, as in their acts, ſo in their *order;* we firſt *believe* by a fiducial perſuaſion, and then we are *ſure* by an evidential perſuaſion; the one is the cauſe, the other the effect: the perſuaſion that is in faith, is like heat in the fire; the perſuaſion that is after faith, is like fire in the room, that is the effect of the other.—They differ in their *object;* the object of fiducial aſſurance is *without* the man, and looks to the promiſe of God, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt; but the object and foundation of evidential aſſurance is *within* the man, and looks to the work of God within; ſuch as, graces, attainments, and experiences.—They differ in their *effects;* the effect of judicial perſuaſion is *juſtification*, the effect of evidential perſuaſion is *conſolation:* a man is not juſtified by his evidential knowledge, or by knowing that Chriſt is his; but he is juſtified by his fiducial knowledge, or his receiving and reſting upon Chriſt for ſalvation, as he is offered in the goſpel. *By his knowledge, ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify many.* Faith is a fiducial act.

7. In a word, It is an *intereſting* act, whereby a man

is

is intereſted in Chriſt and all that he is worth; inſomuch, that upon his believing, all his debts are paid: as a woman that is in debt, upon her marriage to a rich man, all her debt is paid; becauſe, by her marriage, all her debt is transfered upon the huſband that hath married her: ſo the ſoul, being married to Chriſt, hath all his debt paid; the ſoul being now under the covert of its huſband, is not anſwerable for his own debt, nay, hath not his own ſins to anſwer for, but Chriſt the huſband anſwers for them.—And thus much concerning the *act* of faith in receiving Chriſt; it is a ſpiritual act, a warrantable act, a venturing act, an evangelical act, and a fiducial act, as alſo and intereſting act. I come now to conſider,

Secondly, The OBJECT of this act, namely, *Chriſt; As ye have received* CHRIST: which admits of a double interpretation. 1. By Chriſt may be meant Chriſt *doctrinally* conſidered; or the doctrine of the goſpel of Chriſt. 2. By Chriſt may be meant Chriſt *perſonally* conſidered; or Chriſt himſelf received in and by that doctrine.

1. I ſay, by *Chriſt* may be meant Chriſt *doctrinally*, or the doctrine of the goſpel of Chriſt, as Eph. iv. 20. *Ye have not ſo learned Chriſt:* that is, ye have been otherwiſe taught the doctrine of the goſpel. And whoever views accurately the context here, both the verſe preceeding the text, and the verſe following, as formerly explained, will find, that by *Chriſt* here may evidently be underſtood the doctrine of Chriſt, or the goſpel. And indeed none can receive Chriſt, and reject his doctrine; but, in receiving Chriſt, muſt firſt receive his doctrine, and ſo Chriſt therein; and ſo he that receiveth Chriſt is ſaid to *believe the goſpel;* and every true receiver of Chriſt is a receiver of his doctrine, becauſe that is the *ſeed* by which he is conceived and born; and it is the milk by which he is brought up and nouriſhed to eternal life, 1 Pet. i. 23. chap. ii. 2. I need not here ſtand to commend the goſpel doctrine: It is enough to ſay, that by the Lord's bleſſing upon it, it is the ſeed to conceive, and the milk to nouriſh all the children of God. Why? it is the *channel* in which the Spirit runs;

Received

Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Gal. iii. 2.—It is the *organ* of the almighty power of God; *I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt, for it is the power of God to ſalvation, to every one that believeth:* his power in working faith, his power in meaſuring faith, and his power in ſaving ſinners in a way of believing, is put forth in the goſpel; Why? *For therein is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith*, Rom. i. 16, 17. The law hath convinced many, but never converted one to this day; and a goſpel miniſter may preach the law for many good ends, but it is the goſpel part of preaching that doth the buſineſs, if the power of God be going along with it; for the goſpel only is the channel wherein the converting power of the Spirit runs; *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God:* Chriſt is revealed therein in order to his being received. It is not the goſpel of itſelf, but Chriſt revealed therein that heals the ſinner. It is like the ſerpent lifted up upon the pole in the wilderneſs; the pole did not heal, but the ſerpent upon the pole, that healed the ſting; but the pole held it up to be ſeen: Even ſo, it is not the pole of the goſpel that heals, but Chriſt lifted up upon the pole. It is Chriſt that is to be received, but he is to be received as offered in the goſpel; and the goſpel holds out Chriſt to the eye of faith: it is with reſpect to Chriſt what the pole was with reſpect to the ſerpent; and therefore they that pull down this pole of the goſpel, in any reſpect, they take away Chriſt from the eye of the wounded ſoul, the ſtinged ſinner: they that pull down the pole, they take away the ſerpent out of view that the ſinner cannot ſee it. Caſt down Chriſt they cannot, but they will pull down the pole, and ſo take him out of ſight. They that are concerned to have, or to give others a ſight of Chriſt, will be concerned to have the pole ſtreight that holds him up; I mean, the goſpel ſound and clear that holds him forth.

Now, there is no good merchant for the kingdom of heaven, but, for the treaſure's ſake that is hid in the field, will buy the whole field; Matth. xiii. 44. *The kingdom of heaven is like a treaſure hid in a field; the which, when a man*

a man hath found, he hideth; and for joy thereof, goeth and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Well, did the man buy the treaſure only and not the field; as many think they can take Chriſt, and reject the goſpel? No; he went and bought the field where the treaſure was. The treaſure is Chriſt; the field is the goſpel; and he bought, he received the goſpel; and ſo had the treaſure in it. Every true believer values the goſpel at a very high rate; and the reaſon is, becauſe it is the field where the treaſure is hid, where Chriſt is to be had. And yet withal many may receive the goſpel-doctrine by a dogmatical faith, an opinionative faith, and not receive Chriſt himſelf. This is a faith that thouſands periſh by; but true faith receives the goſpel, and Chriſt in it. Therefore,

2. By *Chriſt* here, as the object of faith, we are to underſtand Chriſt *himſelf* to be received; Chriſt *perſonally* conſidered. The object of faith is Chriſt the Son of God, not excluding the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, for each perſon of the glorious Trinity is the object of faith; Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, one God; but this God would be as inacceſſible to us as to the fallen angels, were it not through Chriſt. Chriſt, you know, ſignifies ANOINTED, and to receive Chriſt is to receive him as the *Meſſiah*, the Sent, Sealed, and Anointed of God, Iſa. lxi. 1. His anointing ſignifies his ſingular ordination to be our Redeemer, and to perform the work of our redemption; for, *Him hath God the Father ſealed*, John vi. 27.; SEALED, by the ſuperminent unction of the Holy Ghoſt, and authorized of the Father to it: he did not undertake this work preſumptuouſly, without a call, but by the ordination and appointment of God. His being the Chriſt, points out his eminent qualifications for the work of our redemption; as he is a Redeemer of God's ſending, ſo of God's qualifying; *He hath laid help upon One that is mighty;* One that is able of himſelf, and enabled of his Father to work out our ſalvation and redemption-work: and ſo to receive Chriſt, is to receive God's Sent, God's Anointed, God's Sealed One. And here faith views the divine authority of his commiſſion, in that he is given of the Father to be a Prophet,

Prophet, Prieſt, and King; and came from the Father in his name and authority. And hence there is nothing that Chriſt commends more in the New-Teſtament than this faith that believes his divine miſſion, his divine ordination to this mediatory-work; as John xvii. 8. *I have given unto them the words which thou gaveſt unto me, and they have received them, and have known ſurely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me.* To receive *Chriſt* then, is to receive God's Ambaſſador, God's Anointed; and that is a noble faith.

But again, to conſider the *termination* of faith upon this glorious object: the man that receives Chriſt, receive him as a living root, and as a glorious head: as a living root, in whom he is implanted; and as a glorious head, to whom he is united. Faith goes in to him; and ſo by faith there is a ſaving implantation in him, a ſpiritual union to him; and ſo this receiving of him makes all that is in Chriſt yours. If a man ſhould look for life and righteouſneſs from Chriſt, without union to Chriſt, it is as if a woman ſhould look for an eſtate from a man by conveyance, and not by marriage: now, God gives not any ſaving benefit to ſinners by conveyance, but by marriage and union with Chriſt. Many indeed have a great deal of gifts, parts, and abilities; and ſuch knowledge as per-adventure you may call it revelation; theſe things are given to men through Chriſt, but with this difference; ſome, they receive theſe things from Chriſt as a ſteward, that may diſpenſe them; but not from him as a head, flowing in to them as members. To natural men, and wicked men, theſe things come from Chriſt as a ſteward; but they come not from him as a head of union; for theſe only that are united to him by faith have ſpiritual bleſſings flowing to them from Chriſt, as the head, to them as members. It is true, that unions are great myſteries; the union of God and man, into *one Chriſt*, is a great myſtery; the union of Chriſt, and all his members into *one body*, is a great myſtery; the apoſtle calls it a *great myſtery*, ſaying, *I ſpeak concerning Chriſt and his church*, Eph. v. 32. The believer receiving Chriſt, is in him as a member is in the head, and as a branch is in the root;

and

and in him ſo as that he lives by the life of Chriſt, and is righteous by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and is acted by the Spirit of Chriſt. Neither is this union to Chriſt by receiving him leſſened by this, that Chriſt is in heaven, and we upon earth; for, as the union between man and wife is not leſſened, the one towards another, though they be a thouſand miles aſunder, (though the communion is not ſo much:) ſo here, the union that we have to Chriſt, by receiving him, is not leſſened by his being in heaven, and we upon the earth: It is true, the communion is not ſo cloſe, nor ſo intimate, as it would be, if we were in the ſame place with him; but the union is not leſſened: they are united and married to the perſon of Chriſt by receiving him.

Now, the *object* of faith being Chriſt's perſon, and the receiving of Chriſt, a cloſing with this perſon, here is the honour of all the ſaints. What a comfortable and honourable ſtation is it to be a member united to this glorious Head! And therefore, before I paſs this, I would acquaint you with a thing which you will find true in your experience, namely, many are very much troubled and tried in ſeeking this and the other benefit from Chriſt, ſuch as the pardon of ſin, and mortifying of corruption; they ſeek and are never the better; and what is the reaſon? Even becauſe they begin at the wrong end of the goſpel; at the wrong end of religion and Chriſtianity: they ſeek the things of Chriſt but not the perſon of Chriſt; they look out for his graces and benefits, without cloſing with his perſon. O! ſays one, for ſuch and ſuch a benefit from Chriſt, and ſuch and ſuch graces of his Spirit; very well: but would you have them from Chriſt without union to him? Would ye have bleſſings from Chriſt without Chriſt himſelf? Why, what though you ſhould get ſome bleſſings from him, if you live and die without him. O, ſays one, that goes to a ſacrament, O for ſome communion with Chriſt! very good; but here is the falſity; you would have communion without union to him, and that cannot be. Union to his perſon is the foundation of true communion with him in his benefits; and therefore you may ſeek communion with him, and yet neglect the

foundation. You cannot have true communion without union by faith, receiving Chriſt himſelf; for as the graft cannot have ſap from the root, unleſs it be ſet into the ſtock; if it be not ingrafted, it cannot have communion with the root: ſo, neither can you have theſe graces and comforts that you would have in a way of communion with him, unleſs it be firſt in a way of union to him. And therefore, let it be your great buſineſs, through grace, to cloſe with Chriſt himſelf, the perſon of Chriſt, as he is handed to you in the doctrine of the goſpel: never reſt till the offering hand of the goſpel, and the receiving hand of faith meet together; for when Chriſt is received, then, and not till then, is there a real union; and this is the foundation of all true and ſpiritual communion.—Thus much ſhall ſuffice concerning the object, namely, Chriſt *doctrinally* and *perſonally* conſidered.

SERMON XXXV.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The ſecond Sermon on this text.]

IN the illuſtration of the firſt head of method, which was to ſpeak of the believer's character and dignity as a receiver of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, we propoſed to conſider the *act* of faith, as it is a receiving of Chriſt; next the *object* of it, Chriſt; and then the *capacity* or *reſpect* under which this object is received, *viz.* as he is *Chriſt*, *Jeſus*, *the Lord*. We have conſidered the firſt two, the act and object. It remains,

Thirdly, That we conſider the CAPACITIES or *reſpects* in which Chriſt is to be received, namely, as a JESUS, and a LORD; which will ſtill farther clear the object. There are three letters of Chriſt's name here that point him

him out beyond all other names in the world. I have formerly told you, that Chriſt is offered in theſe capacities, and I have juſt now ſpoke of the firſt letter of his name, *viz.* CHRIST, the *Anointed* of God; and indeed it is not ſound faith that doth not take him as the Sent of God, and qualified of God for the whole redemption work. But the other two letters of his name remain yet to be touched at. And you may conſider them under this view as the two-fold capacities in which we are to receive Chriſt, namely, as *Jeſus the Lord.* 1. As he is *Jeſus.* 2. As he is the *Lord.*

1. As he is JESUS, that is, a *Saviour.* This is the firſt name given to Chriſt in the New-Teſtament, Mat. i. 21. *His name ſhall be called* JESUS, *becauſe he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins;* and it is the beſt name that ſinners can hear tell of: it is a name above all names, both for the glory of him that bears it, and the comfort of them that hear of it. Now, to receive Chriſt as a *Jeſus*, is to receive him as a ſingularly mighty Saviour, that is able to ſave to the utmoſt, as appears by his doing, dying, ſuffering, ſatisfying, conquering; and ſurely, he that was able to atone God, and conquer the devil, is able to ſave ſinners. To receive him as a Jeſus, is to receive him as an univerſal Saviour; I mean, not only in the apoſtle's ſenſe, 1 Tim. iv. 10. that he is the *Saviour of all men, but eſpecially of them that believe;* but I mean in reſpect of the ſalvation that he brings to them whom he makes to believe in him: and ſo I mean, in the ſenſe of the ſame apoſtle, Acts xiii. 39. *By him all that believe are ſaved and juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes.* What law of Moſes? Why, as his ceremonial law could not do the buſineſs; for, *It was impoſſible that the blood of bulls or goats ſhould take away ſin,* ſatisfy offended juſtice, or pacify a wounded conſcience; ſo his moral law could not juſtify; for we, having broken and tranſgreſſed it, inſtead of juſtifying us it condemns us: therefore, *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, that* Chriſt by the goſpel does: he *juſtifies from all things;* from all guilt, ſo as the believer can never become liable to the ſanction of the law. Some would have the be-

liever juſtified only from *ſome things*, as it were, and ſtill liable to the laſh of the law; but we maintain the apoſtle's doctrine, that the believer is juſtified *from all things*, ſo as nothing can be laid to his charge: and ſeeing, *It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that can condemn*, or make him liable thereunto? To receive him as a Jeſus, then, is to receive him as a complete Saviour, a perfect Saviour; that ſaves meritoriouſly, by the price of his blood and his mediation for us; and efficaciouſly, by the power of his Spirit and his effectual operation in us; that ſaves from the law as a covenant both in its commanding and condemning power; that ſaves from death, hell, and wrath. But SALVATION is a great word that we cannot now enlarge upon; only, to receive Chriſt as a Jeſus, is to receive and reſt upon him alone for ſalvation, and all the ſalvation that we need, temporal, ſpiritual, or eternal, in a ſuitableneſs to his promiſe and offer in the word.

2. As he is the *Lord;* which imports a deſire to be ſubject to him, as he is a King; and to be conquered by him, as well as ſaved by him. *Chriſt hath upon his veſture and thigh this name written,* KING *of kings, and* LORD *of lords:* He is the King and Head of his church; the government of all is upon his ſhoulder, particularly the government of Zion, where he hath left officers to rule under him, according to the laws of his kingdom, and in a ſuitableneſs to the liberties of his ſubjects, pointed out in his word; and to have any hand in marring the beautiful order of his government that he hath appointed, or incroach upon the liberties of his people, doth ill become any that profeſs to receive him as a Lord; as little doth it become them to ſay in effect, *Our Lord delays his coming*, and ſo begin to ſmite their fellow ſervants, and ſo fall out with one another, eſpecially when a common enemy is creeping in that would ſubject the government of Chriſt's houſe intirely to a ſecular power, whether it be patrons or prelates, princes or popes. Surely they that receive Chriſt as a Lord and King over themſelves will not be careleſs or indifferent about his lordſhip and government over Zion, as a King and Head of his church; for if they be careleſs about his govern-

ment

ment that way, whether it ſtand or fall, they give evidence of their never truly receiving him as a Lord.

But more particularly, to receive him *as a Lord*, is to cloſe with him for *ſanctification* as well as *ſalvation*, and to welcome him in his kingly office, to ſubdue ſin, conquer Satan, and deſtroy the works of the devil. A true believer does receive Chriſt not only as he is a Saviour, but as he is a Lord. Conſider both theſe capacities jointly, and they may ſearch every corner of your heart. The eye of a loſt ſinner is firſt upon Chriſt as a Saviour; ſo God proponds him, and ſo we may come to him; but obſerve, there may be much ſelf-love in ſeeking Chriſt, a Saviour, for ſalvation; for ſalvation may be deſired merely out of ſelf-love, which is evident, if we are for dividing Chriſt, for taking the *Saviour*, and leaving out the *Lord*. Many would divide between his ſalvation and his dominion; they would have Chriſt as a Saviour, to ſave from wrath; but not as a Lord, to deſtroy their luſts and ſins. But herein true receiving of Chriſt will diſcover itſelf; the Lord makes the man as weary of his load of corruption, as he is weary of his load of condemnation. The man that is weary of condemnation only, would have Chriſt as a Saviour; but he that is weary of corruption alſo, would have Chriſt as a Lord. But when the heart would have water as well as blood, then it is in a right temper; when the man would have water to purify the heart, as well as blood to pacify the conſcience. Our deſire of Chriſt for ſalvation, may be tried with this touch-ſtone, whether we have the ſame deſire for Chriſt, *the Lord;* as for Chriſt, *the Jeſus*.

I think it is utterly impoſſible there can be any more uprightneſs in your deſire after the ſalvation of Chriſt, than there is of a deſire after the dominion of Chriſt. Faith, whatever it is, will bring a man out from under the commanding power of ſin, as well as from under the condemning power of it. And however a believer may ly in darkneſs, yet I conceive, that ſoul is out of danger who is made willing to receive Chriſt both as a Saviour and a Lord; and ſo, willing to receive, out of his hand, poiſon to kill his luſts; as well as pardon to

remove

remove his guilt: the deſire of pardon of ſin, and the deſire of purification of heart, bear proportion; none can truly take Chriſt, as a Saviour for juſtification, but they will alſo truly take him, as a Lord, for ſanctification. This we maintain, let calumny ſay what it will; as if our doctrine were an *enemy to holineſs* *! What can be the ground of the calumny, I cannot know, unleſs it be that men cannot diſtinguiſh betwixt *ſaving* faith, and *juſtifying* faith; for ſaving faith (of which we are now ſpeaking) reſpects Chriſt in all his offices, as a Prophet, Prieſt, and King: but when we ſpeak of faith merely as it is juſtifying, we maintain againſt all the ſubtil Popery in the world, that it reſpects Chriſt only as a Prieſt, as a ſacrifice, and propitiation; but not Chriſt as a King. For, to make that act of faith, that receives Chriſt as a Lord, to be the juſtifying act of faith, is the very ſoul of Popery, that builds juſtification upon ſanctification, or upon ſanctifying faith: whereas it is the receiving of Chriſt as a Prieſt, that alone juſtifies before God. It is true, faith in Chriſt as a Saviour and a Lord, go hand in hand together, they are inſeparably connected; even as the eye and ear are both joined together in one head; yet it is not the office of the eye to hear, or of the ear to ſee; no, but it is the office of the eye to ſee, and of the ear to hear: even ſo, though faith in

* It hath been the fate of the witneſſes for the truths of God, in every period of the church, eſpecially ſince the commencement of Chriſtianity, to be traduced and reproached with the moſt ſcurrilous epithets and opprobrious names. The bleſſed Author of the Chriſtian religion himſelf did not eſcape the obloquy, contumely, and cenſures of the world; and his diſciples were accuſed with being *turbulent* and *peſtilent fellows*, and ſuch as *turned the world upſide down*. When it fared ſo with them, we need not be ſurprized that their ſucceſſors ſhould be flouted at, mal-treated, and evil ſpoken of by thoſe who do not favour the truth as it is in Jeſus.—About the time when our Author delivered theſe diſcourſes, an irreligious diſpoſition, and legal ſpirit was like to ſpread univerſally, and had arrived to ſuch a pitch, that *many could not endure to hear ſound doctrine;* and the teachers and defenders thereof were the objects of the reſentment both of the infidel and legaliſt. As our worthy Author was ſincerely attached to the doctrines of the goſpel, he could not but be ſincerely affected and truly alarmed at every encroachment upon the ſacred truths of his ever glorious Maſter; ſo this led him frequently to notice, in his public appearances, the aſperſions caſt upon him and others, in inculcating the moſt important truths of the goſpel of Chriſt, particularly their being derided as *favourers of Antinomianiſm*, and *enemies to holineſs*, for their befriending the freedom of the doctrine of grace, in aſſerting the neceſſity of ſinners *dying to the law*, in the point of JUSTIFICATION, in order to their *living to God*, in point of SANCTIFICATION. See Vol. I. p. 238. Vol. II. p 304, 305.

Chriſt

Chriſt as a Jeſus and as a Lord go together in one and the ſame believer, and at one and the ſame time, yet they have their different offices: Chriſt as a King and Lord is not the object of juſtifying faith, but only Chriſt as a Prieſt and Saviour. It is not Chriſt as the Lord, ſubduing my ſin, that is the *matter* of my juſtification before God; but Chriſt as a Prieſt paying all my debt: it is not my perſonal righteouſneſs, even in my gracious ſubjection to Chriſt as a Lord, that can be the ground of juſtification; but it is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone as a Prieſt, his doing and dying, that is the ground of juſtification. And therefore it is not faith dealing with Chriſt as a Lord that juſtifies, but faith's dealing with Chriſt as a Prieſt, a Saviour, and a complete Righteouſneſs. This is the doctrine of the word; which, when our Reformers began to publiſh, they were branded as enemies to holineſs and good works: and if ſomething of this be not at the root of many reproaches in our day, I know not what it is; and if this be the ground of theſe reproaches, we may gladly bear them as our glory.

But now, we are ſpeaking of the *object* of faith, more largely taken, in its latitude, as it is ſaving faith; which, we ſay, hath a reſpect to Chriſt in all his offices, and particularly, as in our text, it receives him as a Saviour and a Lord both; and truly, the receiving of Chriſt as a Lord, for ſanctification, is the beſt mark imaginable of right receiving of Chriſt as a Saviour, for juſtification. You may meaſure your faith and intereſt in Chriſt, not by the degree of your perſuaſion concerning him as a Saviour, but rather by the degree of his virtue and power in you as a Lord: it is better to meaſure it by the depth of his work in you, than by the height of your confidence in him, which may be too proud and bold. If you ſhould meet a man travelling upon the way, and ſhould aſk him how many hours high the ſun is, you need not marvel, if inſtead of looking up to the ſun to ſee how high it is, he ſhould look down to your ſhadow to ſee how ſhort it is; for he can tell that way better than looking upon the ſun itſelf: even ſo, if a man would judge how much of Chriſt is in him, the beſt way to try is rather

to

to look downward than upward: look in to your heart and ſee what daſh your pride hath got, and what abatement your corruption is brought under; for the ſhorter theſe dark ſhadows are in you, the higher is the Sun of righteouſneſs. Now, the grand corruption of the heart of man, the great root-ſin, which ſets itſelf againſt Chriſt, as a Lord, I will tell you what it is, it is that lord of all miſ-rule, SELF; that is the lord that lords it over you; and all other ſins are but the brats of Self: they are but ſub-ſervants, under-ſervants to this great lord of ſelf-love, ſelf-pride, and ſelf-righteouſneſs. Now, a true believer is righteous by the righteouſneſs of another; he lives by the life of another; he is acted by the ſpirit of another; and therefore he, of any man in the world, ſhould have leaſt of ſelf in him; becauſe Chriſt, as Lord, doth abſolutely ſet himſelf againſt this great corruption. And therefore, if you would know one excellent way of judging of Jeſus Chriſt the Lord, his being in you, it is by the breaking and caſting down of ſelf; for the more full that a man is of ſelf, the more empty is he of Chriſt; and the more full he is of Chriſt, the more empty he is of ſelf; for the Lord-Self, and the Lord-Chriſt, cannot ſtand together: the lordſhip of Chriſt and the lordſhip of Self are inconſiſtent: when you receive the Lord-Chriſt, then the Lord-Self is unthroned and thrown down.—Thus much of the believer's *character* and *dignity*, as a receiver of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.

II. The *ſecond* general head is, To ſpeak of the believer's *duty*, having received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, then to *walk in him*. You have heard of the two tables of the law, and if you never heard of the two tables of the goſpel, you may ſee them in our text; the firſt is to *receive Chriſt*, and the ſecond is to *walk in him*. Tho' I make not the goſpel, ſtrictly taken, to be a doctrine of commandments and precepts; yet, where the law is in the hand of Chriſt, and where Chriſt is the ALPHA and OMEGA, there we will find the two tables of the goſpel: *Chriſt is All in all*; and theſe two ALLS make the two tables of the goſpel. Or, if the two tables of the goſpel muſt anſwer to the tables of the law, then

conſider

conſider the law as a covenant, or as a rule, and we get both fulfilled in Chriſt; the law as a *covenant* is fulfilled by *receiving Chriſt;* the law as a *rule* is fulfilled by *walking in him:* and ſo the two tables of the law, in either of theſe reſpects, are anſwered by theſe two tables of the goſpel; for, *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.*

I muſt only here touch a little, 1. At the *denomination* of the duty, it is a *walking.* 2. The *qualification* of it, it is a *walking* IN CHRIST. As to the

Firſt, The *denomination* of this duty, it is a *walking.* I know many things might be ſaid in running the parallel; but I do not deſign to ſqueeze the metaphor beyond the ſcope of the text, but juſt to obſerve what is intended therein. And there are theſe three things that I apprehend are intended. It plainly denotes, 1. Practice; 2. Progreſs; 3. Permanency.

[1.] It denotes *practice,* or practicalneſs. And this is oppoſed to a dogmatical faith, where there is no practical religion. Theſe that have received Chriſt they ought to be practical Chriſtians, practical believers; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo* WALK *ye in him:* let your faith be a working faith. As by the ſame hand that we receive a thing, by the ſame hand we work; ſo your faith, if it be ſaving, then as it receives Chriſt in the promiſe of the goſpel, ſo it will work by love in the precept of the law: if it receives Chriſt in the covenant, it will work by love in the commandment; Gal. v. 6. *In Chriſt Jeſus, neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but faith that works by love:* Why? his *commandments are not grievous.*

QUEST. *If we have received Chriſt, what need we more; Chriſt hath done all, and therefore we need do nothing?*

ANSW. Indeed many good principles are abuſed in the world; *e. g.* Chriſt hath done all *for* his people in point of *merit,* and he does all *in* his people in point of *power;* and ſo *without him we can do nothing:* here is a good principle; but thence to infer, that the duty and lawful uſe of means is not ours, is to abuſe this good principle to licentiouſneſs.—*When ſin abounds, grace much*

more abounds; there is a good principle: but thence to infer, *Let us ſin, that grace may abound,* is to abuſe that good principle, and a *turning the grace of God to wantonneſs.*—We are *juſtified by faith, without the works of the law;* there is a notable goſpel principle: but thence to infer, that a juſtified man needs not be conform to the law, here is a good principle abuſed; for, *Do we make void the law, through faith? God forbid; nay, we eſtabliſh the law.*

There are two things concerning a juſtified perſon, which call for practical religion; the one is, God *glorifies him,* and the other is, he is to *glorify God.* God glorifies him; for, *Whom he juſtifies, them he alſo glorifies,* Rom viii. 30. But then God is to be glorified as well as he, and will be glorified by all that are juſtified; and therefore, that they may glorify God, they are to bring forth good fruit. And, on this account, may the Lord deliver us from a dead, unfruitful, and unprofitable faith.

There are four great reaſons why they that have *received Chriſt,* by a goſpel-faith, ſhould *walk in him,* by a goſpel-practice, namely, becauſe hereby the power of faith is ſeen; hereby the trial of faith is made; hereby the beauty of it appears to others; and the comfort of it accrues to ourſelves.

1. Hereby the *power* of faith is ſeen, in that it leads to a goſpel-practice. How is it that its power is thus ſeen? Why, even in oppoſing many and ſtrong luſts: though it ſhould not conquer them, yet it oppoſes them; and to oppoſe and fight againſt ſin, in ſcripture language, is to conquer it: this is a *fighting the good fight of faith.* The power of faith is ſeen in a goſpel-practice, while faith is thus exerciſed in ſowring the ſweeteſt ſin, in bearing the greateſt burden, and making eaſy the hardeſt commandment. When Chriſt ſpeaks of doing the greateſt things, then he compares faith to the leaſt things; when he ſpeaks of *removing mountains,* then he compares faith to a *grain of muſtard ſeed:* and, indeed, faith makes a man to remove mountains of pride, and ſets a man's hatred upon that which he loved; and ſets a man's love upon that which he hated. How ſhall a heavy

heavy weight of lead be made eaſy to a child? Why, if you do not pare the lead, to make the weight leſs, then you muſt add ſtrength to the child; and if he has more ſtrength, though the weight be not pared, yet it makes no matter, becauſe the child hath ſtrength to bear it: even ſo, God in the goſpel makes the command light and eaſy; how ſo? not by paring, or abating the commandment, or diminiſhing the rule, (that is our corrupt way;) but God does it by giving more of faith, and more of Chriſt.——And ſo the power of faith is ſeen in carrying a man through the greateſt duties and trials.

2. Hereby the *trial* of faith is made; I ſay, by a goſpel practice. Many judge of the truth of their faith by the degrees of their confidence; but the beſt trial is by the degrees of their conqueſt over ſin; the degrees of their conqueſts over their luſts and corruptions. As I ſaid before, you may know the height of the ſun by the ſhortneſs of your ſhadow, more than by the degrees of altitude. How much doth a man believe? even as much as his faith *purifies his heart*, and *mortifies his luſts;* ſo much does he believe, and no more. It is true, a man may be believing in Chriſt for juſtification, and coming under the covert of his blood, while in the mean time he ſees no meaſure of ſanctification; but on the contrary his heart full of hell, and enmity and corruption; yea, but in the mean time what is that light wherein he ſees his own vileneſs, but ſanctifying light? And what is that grace whereby he is loathing and abhorring himſelf, but ſanctifying grace? And ſo when juſtifying faith is buſy flying under the covert of blood, ſanctifying grace is not idle; nay, the more that faith acts upon Chriſt for juſtification, the more will it act in purification. Again,

3. Another reaſon why a goſpel faith ſhould have a goſpel-practice is, becauſe hereby the *beauty* of faith appears to others, and *our light ſhines before men, ſo as they ſeeing our good works, do glorify God.* The beauty of faith is ſeen by others, not in faith itſelf, but in the goſpel-walk and practice that it produces. If a man would know in the morning whether the ſun be riſen in the eaſt, he will readily look to the weſt, and ſee whether

he can notice the reflection of the ſun-beams upon the top of a houſe, or the top of a hill; he looks the quite contrary way from the ſun; and yet he does it ingeniou ſly enough: even ſo here, if a man would know you to be a believer, he will not look in to your faith, but will look out to your life, or look back to your converſation, and ſee what marks your faith makes there; hence ſaith the apoſtle, *Shew me thy faith by thy works.* Faith and works are contrary in point of juſtification, and yet when a man would ſee your faith, he will look to the contrary part, and ſee how it appears in your walk and work: and if it appears not there, the beauty of faith is not ſeen.

4. Hereby the *comfort* of faith accrues to yourſelves: even by a goſpel-practice you have the comfort of faith; for, *Great peace have all they that love his law: the fruit of righteouſneſs is peace.* There is no greater comfort in the world than for a man to get, by faith, maſtery over ſin, and grace to do duty for God. Whatever a man does for God, leaving ſelf behind him, it carries the ſweeteſt reliſh in the world with it. All duties, and ſufferings both, are made ſweet by this, that it is done for God. Self, in any duty, doth ſowre the duty be it never ſo admirable; *Let every man prove his own work*, ſaith the apoſtle, Gal. vi. 4. *then ſhall he have rejoicing in himſelf, and not in another.*—Theſe are ſome reaſons why goſpel-faith, in receiving Chriſt, muſt be attended with goſpel-practice in walking in him.

Many talk of practical religion in our day, but few know what it is to walk in it; they are like the lark that ſings with the higheſt, but builds with the loweſt: ſome ſing with the higheſt, as if they were almoſt angels; but where do they build? where are their affections? where are their hearts, their aims, their ends? They are low, earthly, and ſenſual. You that profeſs to be friends to the goſpel, O let the mouths that reproach religion be ſtopped by the power of religion in your walk. If the world call us Antinomians; *It is the will of God that by well-doing we put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men*, 1 Pet. ii. 15. We account them the greateſt ſtars that give the greateſt light; ſo men will account them ſtill the

the greateſt Chriſtians that give the greateſt light, by their goſpel practice in holineſs toward God, and righteouſneſs toward men. If you be not a better ſervant, a better child, a better parent, a better maſter, than you were, or than others are, what credit will religion get by you? Therefore, ſeek a practical faith, leading to a goſpel practice.

[2.] This walk imports not only practice, but *progreſs*; to ſtand ſtill is not to walk. Walking imports progreſs and growth from faith to faith, from ſtrength to ſtrength, from glory to glory. For the truth is, by reaſon of corruption, we are like the boat in a ſtream; if we go not forward by the oar, we go backward by the tyde: ſo, if we go not forward, by the ſtrength of grace, we will go backward, by the ſtrength and power of corruption; even as the boat in the ſtream cannot ſtand, it muſt go backward. It is true, people may be at a ſtand in religion and yet ſeem to walk; men may go the round of duties, and yet not be walking; like a ſpinning wheel, it goes round, but yet it is in the ſame place ſtill. Many may be called old job-trot profeſſors; they are the ſame now that they were twenty years ago; no more holineſs, no more knowledge, no more experience.

QUEST. *What is this growth and progreſs?*

I anſwer, It is not like a wheel that runs round, and ſtands ſtill in the ſame place; but where there is more knowledge of Chriſt, more inſight into the myſteries of the goſpel, more feeling of the power of the goſpel, more victory over luſts and corruptions, *&c.* there is growth and progreſs. It is true, a child of God may fall, and he may relapſe, and fall again; his feet may be benumbed that he cannot walk: but here is the happineſs of a true child of God, one that hath truly received Chriſt, that his ſins are always beneficial to him; he will gain more in holineſs by one ſin, than a natural man will gain by an hundred duties: for his fall is like the ſtumbling of a horſe that makes him ride the faſter; ſo the believer may ſtumble, but when he gets to his feet again, he runs the faſter, makes quicker progreſs in the ways of God; his fall humbles him, and makes him

him more dependant, more watchful, more circumſpect, *&c.*

[3.] This walk imports *permanency* both in the way and doctrine of Chriſt, according to the following verſe, *Rooted and eſtabliſhed in the faith.* A ſingle ſtep is not a walk, it is a permanent motion; therefore it is called a being *eſtabliſhed in the faith, as we have been taught.* Why, how can a man *walk*, and yet be *rooted; walk*, and yet *ſtand ſtable?* theſe are very inconſiſtent; 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord:* STEDFAST, and yet *abounding in the work;* MOVING, and yet *unmoveable!* like the two feet of a pair of compaſſes, the one foot of the compaſs ſtands faſt in the centre, and the other draws the line, and goes round: ſo it is with the believer, his faith is like the foot of the compaſs, that ſtands faſt in the centre, Chriſt and his doctrine; but his goſpel-practice is the part that is like the other foot of the compaſs, it never ſtands, but ever moves in the way of the Lord. He *ſtands faſt in the faith*, and yet *walks.* As in walking, one foot ſtands while the other moves, or elſe a man is leaping and not walking; ſo while we go forward in the way of goſpel-obedience, we muſt ſtand faſt in the faith; that foot muſt ſtand while the foot of obedience moves, or elſe we are like them that leap rather than like theſe that walk: I mean, there are ſome who will leap out of one doctrine into another, not being *eſtabliſhed in the faith of Chriſt*, which was a ſtedfaſtneſs which the apoſtle commends in the Coloſſians here, in the verſe immediately preceeding our text. But as a tree that is planted in one place to-day, and tranſplanted to another place to-morrow, and ſo on from place to place, cannot bear fruit; ſo the ſoul doth not ſtand faſt, but leaps from doctrine to doctrine; from principle to principle; from profeſſion to profeſſion; and is unſettled in the principles of religion, cannot be fruitful: Therefore the apoſtle exhorts, Eph. iv. 14, 15. *That we henceforth be no more children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they ly in wait to deceive: But ſpeaking the truth in love, may grow up into him*

him in all things which is the head, even Chriſt. And Heb. xiii. 9. *Be not carried about with ſtrange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with grace*—And thus you ſee what may be imported in *walking.*

Secondly, The *qualification* of this duty is, it is a *walking in* CHRIST. Here is a great word, and many things might be ſaid upon it; but all that I offer ſhall be in two ſhort words on it at the time. To walk *in Chriſt* is not to walk *in ourſelves*, but *out of ourſelves*. Now, there is a twofold ſelf-denial; a ſelf-denial in point of *ſin*; that is, a *denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*: this the grace of God that brings ſalvation teaches effectually, as the law teaches preceptively. Again, there is a ſelf-denial in point of *grace*. Now, there is a two-fold denial of grace, the one is in point of juſtification, and the other is in point of ſanctification. Conſider theſe two a little, in order to know what it is to walk in Chriſt.

1. There is a denial of grace in point of *juſtification*; a ſelf-denial with reſpect to grace in point of ſubſiſting with God in juſtification. I would aſk you, How do you ſubſiſt in a juſtified ſtate? Are you juſtified by faith in Chriſt without the works of the law? Doth your grace, or ſanctification, juſtify you, or expiate your ſin? Nay, that which brought you into the favour of God at firſt muſt keep you there ſtill. You that are brought into the favour of God, how do you ſtand in favour with him? It is not becauſe of your ſavoury veniſon, but your elder brother's cloaths; it is not your graces or beſt holineſs, but the garment of Chriſt's righteouſneſs that brings you, and keeps you in favour with God. Now, to walk in Chriſt in the matter of juſtification, or looking for acceptance with God, is to be denied to your graces in point of acceptance; but to let Chriſt have his proper room: put not grace in the room of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs; be as holy as you can, but never a whit more juſtified are you thereby; grace hath its place in ſanctification, and walking before God, but it muſt have no place here; for a man doth not ſubſiſt in a juſtified ſtate by his graces, or holineſs; hence

though

though Paul could ſay, Rom. vii. 22. *I delight in the law of God, after the inward man;* but behold how denied he is to this, ſaying, verſe 24. *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of ſin and death?* What then does he? *Thanks be to God,* ſays he, *through Chriſt; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt.* He ſets not ſanctification in the room of Chriſt's righteouſneſs.

2. There is, in ſome ſort, a denial of grace, even in reſpect of *ſanctification;* that is imported in a walking in Chriſt thus; even becauſe a believer doth not walk in Chriſt merely by the ſtrength of habitual grace; nay, he cannot do it but by the operation and motion of the Spirit of Chriſt that cometh down from above: for, as we uſe to ſay, the ſhip does not go by its ſails, but by the wind; the ſails indeed take in the wind, but it is the wind that makes the ſhip to go: ſo, when a believer walks in ſpiritual obedience, either active or paſſive, in doing or ſuffering, it is owing to grace that comes down like auxiliaries, which makes him walk in him. This is what the apoſtle calls *grace ſufficient for him; My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee:* and this makes a weak believer ſtrong, in a moment, both for work and warfare. *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee;* why, had not the apoſtle grace within him? Yea, but the ſcripture gives ground for this diſtinction; there is grace *in* a man, and grace *with* a man; grace *in* the believer, that is, habitual implanted grace; grace *with* the believer, that is, actual aſſiſting grace, that comes and carries him on in his courſe, and by this means he walks in Chriſt, being denied to his own habitual grace, and reſting on him for actual conſtant ſupply.——To walk in Chriſt in both theſe reſpects, is for a ſoul to ſay, *In the Lord only have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: In the Lord only have I* RIGHTEOUSNESS, there is the denial of grace, in point of juſtification: *In the Lord only have I* STRENGTH, there is the denial of grace, in point of ſanctification.

SERMON

SERMON XXXVI.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The third Sermon on this text.]

BUT that I may a little more fully conſider the *qualification* of this duty of walking *in Chriſt*, we may conſider, 1. What it ſuppoſes. 2. What it excludes. 3. What it includes. 4. What it infers.

1*ſt*, What this walking in Chriſt *ſuppoſes*. Theſe two things eſpecially are ſuppoſed to a walking in Chriſt. 1. That Chriſt is the way. 2. That we have got in to that way.

1. It ſuppoſes that Chriſt is *the way*. To walk in Chriſt, ſays plainly that Chriſt is the way; and therefore Chriſt ſays himſelf, John xiv. 6. *I am the way*, &c. There was one other way to heaven before the covenant of works was broken, namely, perfect perſonal obedience; but now there is no other way to heaven but Chriſt, Acts iv. 12. *There is no name given under heaven, whereby to be ſaved, but the name of Chriſt.* What ſort of a way Chriſt is, we may afterwards ſhew, in purſuing of this text; but here I ſhall only add, that whatever elſe be called the way, ſuch as the commandments of the law, and holy obedience thereto; yet, take Chriſt out of that way, and behold it will never reach half way to heaven; take Chriſt out of the Bible, and you will find no way for a ſinner there, but what will land him in hell. Chriſt is the *good old way*, the *new and living way*, and *the way of holineſs* itſelf; for there is no holineſs but what is contained in him, and derived from him: and hence ſome eminent divines explain that ſcripture of Chriſt himſelf, Iſa. xxxv. 8. *An high way ſhall*

be there, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs. There is no holineſs where there is no walking in Chriſt. Never believe the tongue that ſays the preaching of Chriſt is a diſcouragement of holineſs; for to walk in him is the only way of holineſs: it is a holy walk, for he is the holy way.—It ſuppoſes that Chriſt is the way.

2. Our walking in Chriſt ſuppoſes that we have *got in* to that way. We cannot walk in him unleſs we be in him. And therefore receiving Chriſt is here pre-ſuppoſed to a walking in him. By receiving Chriſt we get in to him; and then, and not till then are we in caſe to walk in him. The union of matter and form makes a body; the union of ſoul and body together makes a man; the union of a man and Chriſt together makes a Chriſtian: and till then, empty is he of Chriſt, and of all true good works or ſpiritual walking. A man may bring forth the fruit of good works, morally good, and materially ſo, and may bring them forth as a tree upon his own root, upon old Adam's root; but he can never walk in Chriſt, or bring forth fruit in Chriſt, till he be in Chriſt; for what is fruit that grows upon a tree but the ſap of the root concocted into fruit: ſo, what is walking in Chriſt, or working in him? it is juſt the ſap of the Spirit of grace putting itſelf forth into the fruit of new obedience; and this ſuppoſes union and implantation into the root. Many err in this matter; they reſolve to walk in the way of duty before ever they have received Chriſt, or got in to him; and by theſe means, they think they will get in to Chriſt and receive him: they walk ſo and ſo devoutly that they may receive Chriſt. Thus they invert the order of the text, and put the plough before the horſe; for, receiving of Chriſt, muſt go before walking in him: yea, it is impoſſible there can be a walking in him, before there be a receiving of him. Walk as you will before you receive Chriſt, it is a walking on your own legs; and to think that theſe will bring you to Chriſt, is as if a branch, by bearing fruit upon its own tree, could be thereby tranſplanted upon another tree; no: it is not by bearing fruit upon its own tree, but it muſt be cut of from its own root, ere it can be ingrafted into, or bring forth fruit upon another: even ſo, it is not your bearing fruit on your own old

ſtock,

ſtock, or doing many good works that will bring you to Chriſt; nay, you are miſtaken; you muſt be cut off from your old ſtock, and from your own works, and ingrafted into Chriſt.—Thus, walking in him ſuppoſes union to him. Therefore,

2*dly*, What this walking in Chriſt *excludes*. It excludes ſin and ſelf; a ſinful walk, and a ſelfiſh walk. So far as a man walks in Chriſt he cannot walk in ſin, nor walk in himſelf.

1. It excludes a *ſinful* walk, a walking in ſin or in the fleſh; for, they that are in Chriſt, they *walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 1. Though they have ſin in them yet they do not walk in it, like the reſt of the world; becauſe ſo far as Chriſt comes in, ſin goes out. Some ſpeak of forſaking ſin, in order to, and before coming to Chriſt; but never will you forſake ſin evangelically, till once Chriſt come to you, and you come to him. When Chriſt comes in to the temple, he drives out all the buyers and ſellers; and therefore, let him in, and he will make the houſe clean. His coming is like the coming of light; as the light comes in to the houſe, the darkneſs goes out; even ſo, as the Sun of righteouſneſs ſhines in to the ſoul, the ſhadows of ſin and darkneſs evaniſh.—When a man walks, he leaves ſomething behind him, which he turns his back upon; ſo he that walketh in Chriſt, he turns his back upon his old maſter, the devil, ſaying, Wo is me that I have been ſo long led captive by him at his will!— He turns his back upon his old acquaintance, the world, ſaying, O vain world! I have ſeen ſomething of the matchleſs glory of the Son of God, and therefore look upon all worldly glory as nothing, and leſs than nothing and vanity.—He turns his back upon his old luſts and idols, ſaying with Ephraim, *What have I any more to do with idols?* Fain would he be rid of ſin; Lord, take vengeance on this luſt and that luſt; give it a dead ſtroke that it may never revive again.—He turns his back upon his old religion, that he may *ſerve the Lord in newneſs of Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the latter*. He leaves his cradle-faith behind him, and gets a faith of God's operation: He leaves his old hope behind him, which had no foun-

dation but ſand, and is begotten again to a new and lively hope: He leaves his old legal way of performing duty behind him, and learns a new obedience, influenced by new-covenant grace, and by the love of Chriſt conſtraining him. And therefore,

2. It excludes a *ſelfiſh* walk. This walking in Chriſt excludes a walking in ſelf; for the more that a man walks in Chriſt, the more does he walk out of ſelf: as Chriſt comes in, ſelf goes out; when Chriſt is received, ſelf is expelled. The ſelf-righteous ſinner is like an empty bottle filled with nothing but air; but pour wine into the bottle, and as the wine goes in, the air goes out: ſo, the ſoul is filled with nothing but airy ſpeculations, and a light, vain eſteem of himſelf; but let Chriſt in, let the wine of the Spirit be poured in to the ſoul, as that wine goes in, the air will go out. The ſelfiſh ſinner is like an empty ſtomach, filled with nothing but wind; but if wholeſome food be received and digeſted; then the wind is gradually diſpelled: ſo here, the ſinner is filled with the wind of pride and ſelf; but if Chriſt, *the bread of life, and water of life*, be received and digeſted, then it diſſipates the wind of pride: his ſelf-eſtimation is turned to ſelf-abhorence; his ſelf-juſtification is turned to ſelf-condemnation; his ſelf-love is turned to ſelf-loathing; his ſelf-dependance is turned to ſelf-renounciation; his ſelf-ſeeking is turned to ſelf-ſearching, and ſelf-examination, and to a ſeeking of God and his glory. Inſtead of ſerving himſelf, his deſire is now to ſerve God as his only Maſter: inſtead of exalting himſelf, his deſire is now to glorify God as his chief end: inſtead of pleaſing himſelf, his deſire is to pleaſe God, not to ſatisfy his juſtice, as a Judge, for that the Surety hath done, but to pleaſe his heart as a Father; he dares not venture on any thing that will diſpleaſe ſuch a kind Father: inſtead of reſting in himſelf, his deſire is to reſt in the Lord, and enjoy him, ſaying, O to enjoy him in his grace, and in his glory! to enjoy him in this and that duty; in this and that ordinance; until I enjoy him fully in heaven?

Now, when a ſelfiſh walk is excluded, it excludes at the ſame time, a natural walk, a legal walk, and a phariſaical

phariſaical walk.—It excludes a *natural* walk, which being grounded only upon the light of nature amounts to no more but a natural righteouſneſs.—It excludes a *legal* walk, which being grounded only upon the light of the law, and that as a covenant, makes but a legal imperfect righteouſneſs.—It excludes an *hypocritical* walk, which being grounded only upon the external light of the goſpel, makes only a phariſaical righteouſneſs, where the man hath *the form of godlineſs, but denies the power of it.*—— Many things here might be added as to what this walking in Chriſt doth exclude, which may afterward fall in upon the application. I come, therefore,

3*dly*, To conſider what this walking in Chriſt doth *include*. Not to multiply particulars here either; there are two things more eſpecially that it ſeems to include. Walking in Chriſt is, 1. A walking in a conformity to him. 2. In the improvement of him.

1. It is a walking in a *conformity to him*, and ſo to walk in Chriſt is to be *like him*. In heaven the ſaints *ſhall be like him*, for they ſhall *ſee him as he is:* Even ſo here, when *we behold his glory*, and are *changed into the ſame image*, then it is that we walk in him; even as the body walks where-ever the head walks; and where the head and the body walk, there the feet walk; all that is in the head walks. This then is a walking in him who is the glorious Head, when the members follow the Head, and walk in a conformity to him.—It is a walking in a conformity to his *nature*, being holy as he is holy, perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, merciful as he is merciful, *&c.*—It is a walking in a conformity to his *way of walking;* 1 John ii. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought to walk even as he alſo walked.* Did he walk in love to God and man? Did he walk in zeal, ſo as the *zeal of God's houſe did eat him up?* Did he walk in meekneſs, patience, humility, and activity, always going about doing good, never weary of well-doing? We are to walk as he thus walked.—It is a walking in a conformity to his *ends* that he ſet before him; his end was the glory of God, the advancement of his kingdom, the ruin of Satan's kingdom,

dom, and in all the praiſe of his rich and free grace; and ſurely we will walk in him, when we have theſe for our ends which were his ends.—It is a walking in a conformity to his *law*, which is a tranſcript of his communicable nature for our practice; he walked in a conformity to his own law, in all its holy, juſt, good, and merciful ways; and we will walk in him, when we walk in a goſpel-conformity to the ſame.—It is a walking in a conformity to the *relations* that he comes under to us: and ſo it is a walking in him as our Redeemer, by price and power, which we do when we walk as theſe who *are not their own, but bought with a price*, therefore *glorifying the Lord in our ſouls and bodies which are his.*—It is a walking in him as our *Head*, by living as members of ſuch a Head, and deriving ſpiritual virtue from him.—It is a walking in him as our *Father*, depending on him as children upon their father.—It is a walking in him as our *Judge*, *Lawgiver*, and *King;* and ſo a walking as theſe that are accountable to, and as we ſhall anſwer at the tribunal of this Judge; ſitting at the feet, and receiving the law from the mouth of this Lawgiver; and yielding the tribute of praiſe, obedience, and ſubjection to this King.——In a word, it is a walking in conformity to the *privileges* we receive from him: Hath he *enlightened* us in the knowledge of himſelf? Then to walk in him, is to *walk as children of light*, and not as theſe that are in the darkneſs of ignorance.—Hath he *called* us effectually? Then to walk in him, is to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.*—Hath he given us *grace?* Then to walk in him is to walk, not as graceleſs, but as gracious perſons; not as theſe that are in a ſtate of nature, but in a ſtate of grace.—Hath he pardoned our ſins, juſtified our perſons, brought us into peace with himſelf? Then to walk in him, is to walk ſo as to *ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith he hath made us free.*—Hath he poured in the *promiſe* into our hearts? Then to walk in him, is to walk ſo as *having theſe promiſes, to cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord.*—Hath he made us *heirs* of glory? Then to walk in him, is to walk as candidates for heaven, as *pilgrims*

and

and ſtrangers in the earth, and ſo having our *converſation in heaven.*

2. It is a walking *in the improvement of him.* To walk in Chriſt is to improve him by faith, as we receive him thereby. It is to improve and make uſe of him for light, life, ſtrength, motion, acceptaince, and all in him.—And ſo to walk in him, is to walk as theſe that have their *life* in him, and cannot live without him, no more than the body can live without the head; *Without me ye can do nothing*, John xv. 5.—To walk in him, is to walk as theſe that have their *light* in him, ſaying, *The Lord is my light;* and *though I walk in darkneſs, the Lord will be a light to me.*—To walk in him, is to walk as theſe that have their *ſtrength* in him, ſaying, *Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing of ourſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God;* and, *I can do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening me;* hence they are called to *be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt.* Art thou in Chrſt? Then the grace that is in him is forthcoming for thee: as the life that is in the heart is in the toe, the foot, the outermoſt member of the body; ſo is the believer's grace in Chriſt; and if the grace that is in Chriſt were not in the believer alſo in his meaſure, how could he be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt?—To walk in Chriſt is to walk as theſe that have their *acceptance* in him; *we are accepted in the Beloved;* not merely for his ſake, but in him as our Head; who having fulfilled the law, and ſatisfied the juſtice of God, his doing is ours, becauſe we are in him: the Head having done it, the body is reputed as having done it; and ſo we are accepted in him.—To walk in Chriſt, is to walk as theſe that have their *motion* in him: we cannot move ſpiritually, but by the Spirit of Chriſt; and indeed if our life and ſtrength be in him, our motion muſt be in him alſo.—To walk in Chriſt, is to walk as theſe that have their *fulneſs* in him; their wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption; and are complete in him by virtue of their union to him.—You ſee what a vaſt field is here, and how much lies in this walking in Chriſt. It is an improvement of him for all, as having our all in him.

And yet further, this walking in Chriſt imports ſuch an improvement of Chriſt by faith, as I told you before this

this walking did import. Walking, I ſaid, did import theſe three things eſpecially, namely, practice, progreſs, and permanency: ſo here, this walking in Chriſt imports a practical improvement of Chriſt; a progreſſive improvement of him; and a permanent improvement of him.

(1.) A *practical* improvement of Chriſt; that is, not only a receiving of Chriſt, and then ſuffering it to ly ſleeping, as it were, in the dull habit; but it implies faith in practical actings and vigorous exerciſe of it, and laying faſter and faſter hold upon him; and reducing your faith into practice, that you may *adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things.*

(2.) A *progreſſive* improvement of Chriſt; a *following on to know the Lord.* It is not a ſtanding ſtill, a ſitting down, or going back, but a walking in Chriſt, a going forward; *Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are before, and preſſing towards the mark for the prize of the high call of God,* Phil. iii. 13. The man that walks in Chriſt can never get enough of him.

(3.) It is a *permanent* improvement of Chriſt. A man that takes a ſtep or two forward, and then ſits down again, he cannot be ſaid to walk: ſo, ſome take a ſtart of devotion, a fit of zeal and concern for religion, perhaps about a communion, but it dies out. Theſe cannot be ſaid to walk in Chriſt; for walking in him is a conſtant, permanent, perſevering, and continued improvement of him. It is true, this conſtant progreſs is not always diſcernable; ſaints themſelves may have their winter-withering, as well as their ſummer-fruit: and we are not to judge of the growth of a tree by looking to it this day from what it was yeſterday; for there may be no ſenſible alteration; but ſtay till the ſpring come, and then you will diſcern the flouriſh and the fruit; yea, let ſome years paſs, and then you may ſee ſome ſenſible growth of the whole tree: ſo, the children of God are not always to judge of their continued growth, by comparing what they are this day, with what they were the former day; or what they are this month, with what they were the former month, leſt there be no diſcernable

ble advance; but let them (at leaſt, if they be of any ſtanding in Chriſt) judge by what they are now, from what they were at their firſt ingraftment into Chriſt, and they will find that they have attained more knowledge of Chriſt than at firſt, more experience of his favour, more outlettings of his grace than they underſtood before; more inſight into the goſpel, more ſtroaks that their corruptions have got, and ſo more fruit and growth.

This improvement of Chriſt is permanent; it is a walking in Chriſt, and abiding in him; John xv. 5. *He that abideth in me, and I in him; the ſame bringeth forth much fruit; for without me,* [or, SEPARATE FROM ME,] *ye can do nothing.* And ver. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and they are caſt into the fire, and are burnt.* To receive Chriſt, is to enter upon the bridge; and to walk in him, is to keep the bridge; for a downfal on either ſide is dreadful. Some fall down, as it were, on the right ſide of the bridge, as hypocrites and ſelf-righteous perſons; ſome on the left ſide of the bridge, as theſe that give themſelves over to profane practices. There is a few that keep the bridge, and theſe are true believers and receivers of Chriſt; or, if they happen to fall, they are like a man that falls half down, as it were, and is kept up by a chain faſtened to his body; he may get a hurt by the fall, and put to a terrible fright by it, leſt he drown and periſh; but the chain pulls him up again: even ſo, the believer, he is tied, as it were, to the bridge by a chain, a double chain, namely, the ſpirit of faith dwelling in him, and the grace of faith wrought in him; for, *He that is joined to the Lord is one ſpirit;* and of this faith Chriſt hath ſaid, *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* yea, there is the chain of a ſure promiſe, the chain of divine faithfulneſs, the chain of an everlaſting righteouſneſs. However, if he do not keep the chain, he may fall ſo as to be put in fear of periſhing in the gulf of everlaſting wrath; and he may hing at the chain, as it were, betwixt hope and deſpair: he may hurt his peace and comfort by his unwatchfulneſs; and God may *viſit his iniquity with the rod*, and hing him over the gulf, till the chain pull him up again. It is there-

fore dreadful in any caſe not to keep the bridge. I come now to conſider,

4*thly*, What this walking in Chriſt doth *infer*. It infers and brings along with it eſpecially two things, namely, a walking with his Father, and a walking in his Spirit.

1. A walking *with his Father*. *Enoch walked with God*. *Walk humbly with thy God*. And what is it to walk with God, but to walk in communion with him, and comfortable enjoyment of him?—In *communion* with him; in a conſtant contemplation of him, *ſanctifying the Lord in our hearts*; in a conſtant affection to him, having *his love ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*; and in a conſtant dependance on him, receiving our all from him by faith, and returning our all to him in duty and gratitude.—It is a walking in the comfortable *enjoyment* of him, as all our portion and happineſs, all our ſalvation, and all our deſire; renouncing all things in heaven and earth, as our portion, but a God in Chriſt alone: and indeed to enjoy God, is to enjoy all, and more than words can expreſs, or thought conceive; it is to enjoy BEING itſelf, in whoſe nature is ingroſſed all poſſible perfections.

2. It infers a walking *in his Spirit*; Gal. v. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh*. And to walk in the Spirit is, in ſhort, to walk in the *light* of the Spirit, as a *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*.—It is to walk in the *love* of the Spirit, as a Spirit of love in the ſoul, working love towards God and man.—It is to walk in the *liberty* of the Spirit, with enlarged hearts towards God, and the things of God.—In the *comforts* of the Spirit, Acts ix. 31.—In the *ſtrength* and *power* of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 2.—And in all the *graces* and *fruits* of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23.

SERMON

SERMON XXXVII.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The fourth Sermon on this text.]

THERE are two things which the ſcriptures principally teach (as you may all know by your Catechiſm) *viz.* 'What we are to believe concerning God, 'and what duty God requires of man.' *Faith* and *practice* are the two great things in it; what we are to believe, and what we are to do. This text then is a ſhort compend of the whole ſcripture; for it contains all that concerns firſt our faith, and next our practice: yea, it not only teaches *what* we are to believe, and *what* we are to do, or practiſe, but alſo *how* we are to believe, and *how* we are to practiſe. How are we to *believe?* Even by *receiving Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* for *believing* and *receiving* is the ſame thing, John i. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* And ſo to believe aright is to receive Chriſt, and to receive him aright is to receive him as a Jeſus, and as a Lord; as a Jeſus, that we may be ſaved by the price of his blood; and as a Lord, that we may be governed by the power of his Spirit.—Again, how are we to *practiſe;* Even by *walking in him;* and walking in him *as we have received him.* Now, as to the *rule* of the believer's walk, it lies moſt emphatical here in the AS and the SO in the text; *AS ye have received, SO walk:* which, in the general, imports, that a goſpel-walk is a walking by faith; for, AS *we receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord* by faith, SO *we are to walk in him,* namely, by faith. There can be no right walking, or working, but by faith; this is the ſpring of the ſpiritual life; *The juſt ſhall live by faith,*

Rom. i. 17. Hab. vii. 4. Gal. iii. 11. Heb. x. 38. And this walk is expreſly called a *walking by faith*, 2 Cor. v. 7. *We walk by* FAITH, *and not by ſight. As ye have received Chriſt, ſo walk in him:* Did you receive him by faith? So walk in him by a continual receiving of him, and drawing virtue from him to enable you to hold on your way. But this leads us to the next general head of the method.

III. The *third* general head of the method is, To ſpeak of the *rule* of the believer's duty, and the *proportion* it ſhould bear to his reception of Chriſt, namely, That he is to *walk in Chriſt* AS *he hath received him.*

More particularly, ſeeing the great emphaſis of the text lies in the AS and SO, importing, that the walk is to be ſuitable to the reception, we would enquire what *proportion* and *ſuitableneſs* this walk ſhould have to the receiving of Chriſt: And here conſider, 1. The proportion and ſuitableneſs of this walk to the *act* of receiving, or the *manner* wherein we receive Chriſt. 2. The proportion and ſuitableneſs thereof to the *object* received, or to the capacities wherein we received Chriſt, namely, as he is *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.*

Firſt, The proportion or ſuitableneſs of this walk to the *act* of receiving; or the *manner* wherein we received him. Here then I muſt addreſs the believer, who only is capable of this work, becauſe he only hath received Chriſt, and muſt enquire at him how he hath received Chriſt, that he may be directed how to walk in him.

1. Then, Did you receive Chriſt *obedientially* and *warrantably*, upon the warrant of the call and command of God, requiring you to come to him, and receive him? Did you not ſee the authority of God interpoſed, ſaying, *This is his commandment that ye believe in the name of his Son?* And to this authority you was made to ſtoop in a day of power. Why then, as ye have received Chriſt *obedientially*, ſo walk ye in him, namely, obedientially; from a regard to the ſovereign will and authority of a God in Chriſt. And this is the will of God in Chriſt concerning you, even that you receive the law from Chriſt's

Chriſt's mouth, and out of his hand; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed, hear ye him.*

2. Did you receive Chriſt *humbly* and *meekly?* Was your ſoul humbled to the duſt when you received him? Did you ly proſtrate before him, under a ſenſe of your own emptineſs, weakneſs, and wickedneſs? Did you trample upon yourſelf as a beaſt, a dog, a devil, a lump of hell, having *no confidence in the fleſh?* Well, as ye have received him *humbly*, ſo walk in him; *Walk humbly with thy God*, Micah vi. 8. Walk in a humble dependence upon him, receiving your all from him by faith, and returning your all to him in duty and gratitude.

3. Did you receive him *deliberately* and *reſolutely*, with due deliberation, judgment, and conſideration, reſolving to take your hazard with him, to part with all for him, and to follow him whitherſoever he goes, to welcome his croſs and his crown? Why then, ſo walk ye in him, namely, with deliberation; weighing the advantages in one ſcale, and the diſadvantages in another, of walking in him or not. You will meet with nothing in this way, but what you was made to weigh, if you rightly received him. Even though loſſes, and croſſes, and martyrdom ſhould be in the ſcale where Chriſt was; and the world, and all the profits, pleaſures, and preferments of it, in the other ſcale; yet you was made to chooſe Chriſt. Why then, ſo walk in him, by evidencing it in your life, that whatever reproaches you ſuffer for his name, or whatever trials you may ſuffer, you are at a point. Having deliberately received, deliberately walk.

4. Did you receive Chriſt *uprightly*, with the utmoſt integrity, ſincerity, and exactneſs? Why then, ſo walk ye in him, evidencing in your life the ſame uprightneſs and integrity: *He that walketh uprightly walketh ſurely*, ſaith Solomon: *See then that ye walk circumſpectly*, ſaith the apoſtle, Eph. v. 15. the word is ἀκριβῶς, that is, *exactly*, *accurately*, and *preciſely*. Some are cenſured as if they were too preciſe in their religion; but it is the command of God, that we be as exact and upright in the way of walking in Chriſt, as in the act of believing in him, and receiving of him.

5. Did

5. Did you receive Chriſt *cordially*, *chearfully*, and *lovingly*? Did you receive him with the heart, and with a thouſand good-wills? And, oh? how ſweet was he to you in the day that God revealed him in you, and that you was made to ſtrike hands with him. Then *ſo walk ye in him*: that is, endeavour, through grace, to keep up that frame of heart that you had in cloſing with him, and to bring up your converſation to the way and manner in which ye received him, by walking in him cordially and chearfully; having the *joy of the Lord for your ſtrength*; rejoicing in Chriſt Jeſus: for, *he meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteouſneſs*; and entertaining a ſenſe of his love which you had in the day of believing, ſo as his love may conſtrain you to obedience; and you may *fear the Lord and his goodneſs*. In the day of believing, was you not more elevated, and more chearful, than ever the bird that ſat upon the brier? Was you not filled with *joy unſpeakable and full of glory*? Away then with ſinful diſcouragement in your walk, ſaying, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? why art thou diſquieted within me? Hope in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God*, Pſalm xliii. 5.

6. Did you not receive him *ſpiritually*; that is, in the ſtrength, and under the conduct of his own Spirit, without whoſe influence and aſſiſtance you could do nothing? Then, *ſo walk ye in him* ſpiritually, depending on the grace, ſtrength, conduct, and influence of his Spirit, for ſtrengthening you both for your work and warefare; and ſo, with the true circumciſion, worſhipping God in the Spirit, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, and walking in the Spirit of Chriſt. The Spirit is in every believer according to his meaſure; and when the believer is in the Spirit, then it is well with him; Rev. i. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.* The man that walketh in Chriſt, as he hath received him, walketh not carnally but ſpiritually, juſt as he received him; and hence he cries for the Spirit, ſaying, *Lord, hold me with thy free Spirit*; and *take not thy Holy Spirit from me: Thy Spirit is good, lead me to the land of uprightneſs.*

7. Did

7. Did you not receive Chriſt *ſpeedily?* Yea, none can tell how ſpeedily the poor ſoul that ſaw himſelf ready to drop into hell doth flee to Chriſt in a day of power. Oh! with what eagerneſs, and earneſtneſs doth the convinced ſinner flighter after him? and how actively he runneth in to him? Well, did you receive him ſpeedily and actively? *So walk ye in him*, by endeavouring, through grace, to be ſpeedy in your motion, ready and active in his ſervice. This is to have a walk ſuitable to the manner of your receiving of Chriſt. To be lazy and unactive doth not anſwer the right reception; but to *run in the way of his commandments*, and to *run without wearying*, this is ſuitable; for in a day of believing, the ſoul is far from wearying, nay, then he flies on the wings of faith and love.

8. Did you not receive him *fiducially* and *confidently*, having *boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus*, and drawing near with *full aſſurance of faith*, and with ſome meaſure of application, appropriation, and perſuaſion? Whatever unbelieving diffidence took place, yet according to the meaſure of faith, ſuch was the meaſure of holy confidence, truſt, and perſuaſion, founded upon the truth and veracity of God in the promiſe. Well then, *ſo walk ye in him*, whatever oppoſition be in the way; ſaying, with Job, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him. Caſt not away your confidence*, ſaith the apoſtle to the Hebrews, *which hath great recompence of reward*, chap. x. 35.; and *hold faſt the confidence*, chap. iii. 6.; for, *we are made partakers of Chriſt, if we hold feſt the beginning of our confidence ſtedfaſt unto the end*, ver. 14.

9. Did you not receive Chriſt *wholly* and *undividedly*, in all his three offices, and in all the four excellencies that the apoſtle puts together, 1 Cor. i. 30. for *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification*, and *redemption?* Did you receive him for WISDOM, to make you *light in the Lord?* for RIGHTEOUSNESS, to make you *accepted in the Beloved?* for SANCTIFICATION, to make you *holy?* and for REDEMPTION, to make you *happy?* Why then, *ſo walk ye in him.* Ye cannot walk *wiſely*, if ye do not improve him

him for your wiſdom; ye cannot walk *acceptably*, unleſs ye improve him for righteouſneſs; nor *holily*, unleſs ye improve him for ſanctification; nor *ſafely*, unleſs ye improve him for your complete redemption.

10. Did you not receive Chriſt *orderly* and *evangelically*, or in the goſpel order, namely, as the *Lord your righteouſneſs and ſtrength*; firſt, to be your *righteouſneſs* for your *juſtification*; and then to be your *ſtrength* for *ſanctification?* The legal order is juſt the reverſe of this; the man would do by his own ſtrength, and then be juſtified by his own doing. But true faith receives Chriſt in the goſpel order; that is, firſt to be juſtified by his righteouſneſs; and then ſanctified by his grace and ſtrength; knowing that his performances cannot be accepted, nor acceptable ſervice, until his perſon be *accepted in the Beloved*. Now, have you received Chriſt orderly, then walk in him orderly; for, *To him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God*, Pſal. l. 23. And walk in him evangelically as ye have received him; that is, from a goſpel-principle; the love of Chriſt conſtraining to a goſpel-end, *the glory of a God in Chriſt*; and in a goſpel-manner, going on in *the ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, and his only*.

In a word, Did you not receive him *irreverſibly*, ſo as never to part with him? Why then, *ſo walk ye in him*, ſaying, as Ruth to Naomi, *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for, whither thou goeſt, I will go; and where thou lodgeſt, I will lodge; thy people ſhall be my people; and thy God my God: Nothing ſhall part thee and me*, Ruth i. 16, 17.——And thus we ſee the *proportion* that this walk ſhould bear to the receiving of Chriſt, with reſpect to the manner of receiving him.

Secondly, The proportion or ſuitableneſs of this walk to the *object* received, or, to the *capacity* wherein we receive him, comes next to be ſpoke to. Here we may conſider, 1. The three generals mentioned in the text, CHRIST, JESUS, the LORD. 2. The manifold particulars that are comprehended under, and deduceable from theſe; and in all theſe we may view the proportion that our walk ſhould bear to our faith objectively conſidered.

1*ſt*, Notice

1*ſt*, Notice the three generals in the text holding forth the object of faith, CHRIST, JESUS, the LORD. And,

1. Have you received him as the CHRIST, the Anointed of the Father? *ſo walk ye in him;* even in him as the Chriſt. Now, as I obſerved in the former part of the doctrinal heads, Chriſt is to be conſidered both doctrinally and perſonally.

Conſider Chriſt *doctrinally;* that is, the doctrine of Chriſt, which you, believer, have received, while you received Chriſt in his word and in the doctrine of the goſpel. As ye have received, or believed the doctrine of Chriſt, or the truth of the goſpel, ſo walk ye in it. If you conſider the text, with the context, both preceding and following, you will ſee that Chriſt, doctrinally conſidered, is particularly here intended, not excluding, but including Chriſt perſonally conſidered. And indeed none can receive Chriſt, and reject his doctrine: If a man profeſs to take Chriſt, and yet neglect the goſpel, he is a liar; for he that will have the treaſure, muſt buy the field where the treaſure is, Mat. xiii. 44. Now, did you receive Chriſt *doctrinally*, by receiving the truth as it is in Chriſt? then *ſo walk ye in him;* that is, walk in the truth; 2 John ver. 4. *I rejoiced that I found thy children walking in truth. I am the way and the truth*, ſays Chriſt: If we walk in this way we muſt walk in the truth. And this intimates to us,

(1.) That they cannot be walking in Chriſt, who are not *zealous for truth, and againſt error;* zealous for Chriſt, the Truth, in oppoſition to all error; and ſo to walk in Chriſt, is to *contend for the faith once delivered to the ſaints;* for, if we have received the truth, as it is in Chriſt, then to walk in him, as we have received him, is to maintain his truth, and perſevere in the true doctrine of the goſpel, in oppoſition to all error on the right and left hand, *not holding the head*, Col. ii. 19. If a man be careleſs whether truth ſink or ſwim, he is not one who walks in Chriſt, or holds the head. Some inſtead of holding by the head, they hold by the foot; it is enough to them, that ſuch a good man, or ſuch a learned man ſays ſo and ſo, concerning this or that truth: and ſo they that let the head go, and hold by the foot,

not regarding the truth as it is in Chriſt, but the truth as it is delivered by ſuch a man, whom they eſteem, and ſuch another man, that hath this and that good character. Why, Sirs, if ye have received Chriſt as the Truth, then ye are to walk in him as the Truth; as the head and the heart of the Truth, and not to hang your faith on the belt of any man or angel; for, *If we, or an angel from heaven, preach another goſpel, let him be accurſed.* Again,

(2.) It intimates to us, that they cannot be walking in Chriſt, who are not *zealous againſt all aboliſhed ceremonies;* for Chriſt is the Truth, in oppoſition to types and ceremonies: theſe were *ſhadows of things to come, but the body is Chriſt*, ver. 17,—23. The falſe apoſtles joined the doctrines of Chriſt with the ceremonies of Moſes; but the Coloſſians are exhorted, that as they have received Chriſt, the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows and ceremonies, ſo they ſhould walk in him, not in Moſes; *The law came by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt:* And if they that profeſs to receive Chriſt, as the ſubſtance and body of all the ceremonies, and yet do walk in conformity to the Moſaical ceremonies that were inſtitute of God, do not at all walk ſuitably to their profeſſion of receiving Chriſt; much more they that profeſs to receive Chriſt, and yet conform themſelves to ceremonies that were never inſtituted of God at all, but are the mere inventions of men; ſuch as, the abjured ceremonies of the church of Rome and England. Though ceremonial ſervice and ſuperſtitious worſhip had never been abjured, by ſolemn National Covenant, as it was; yet we ſtand obliged, by the word of God, to renounce and reject the ſame; becauſe we are obliged to *walk in Chriſt*, and to walk in him as we *have received him:* and if we received him aright, we have received him *doctrinally* as he is the Truth; the Truth, in oppoſition to error; and the Truth, in oppoſition to ſhadows and ceremonies. Again,

Conſider Chriſt *perſonally*, as he is the Anointed of the Father. Now, believer, have you received Chriſt as the Anointed of God? that is, not only have you been made to believe that he is ſealed and authorized of the

Father

Father to his mediatorial work, and qualified for it of the Father by the ſupereminent unction of the Holy Ghoſt: but alſo, have you, by faith, gone in to him, and cloſed with him as ſuch, and ſo are made a partaker of the ſame anointing of the Holy Ghoſt, by virtue of union to Chriſt; for, *He that is joined to the Lord, is one ſpirit?* Why then, ſo walk ye in him; that being in him, you may abide in him by a lively faith; John xv. 5. be *rooted* and *built up in him*, and *eſtabliſhed in the faith*, ver. 7th of this chapter where the text lies, *Even in Chriſt in whom ye are builded together, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit*, Eph. ii. 22.—Have ye received him as the Chriſt, the Anointed of God? Then ſo walk in him, by improving him and employing him ſtill to anoint you with the ſame anointing.—Have ye received him as the Chriſt, the Authorized of the Father? Then ſo walk in him, by employing him as one that hath a warrant and authority to ſave, to heal, and help you in time of need.

2. Have you received him as a JESUS, a Saviour? This is another title he hath in the text; as one that ſaves from the *guilt of ſin*, the *wrath of God*, the *curſe of the law*, and from *all things from which ye could never be juſtified by the law of Moſes*. Why then, *ſo walk ye in him;* even in him as a Jeſus, in which capacity ye have received him. Be daily looking to him for daily ſalvation; and daily flying in to his ſaving arms, and taking ſhelter under the ſhadow of his blood and righteouſneſs; and let your walk and converſation before God and the world, evidence that you have received him as a Jeſus, a Saviour.

(1.) Have you received him as a Jeſus? ſo walk in him *before God*, by reſting on him for complete ſalvation; and rejoicing in him as God's Salvation, as old Simeon called him; *Now mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* Look not for any ſalvation you need from God, by any other means, but only in and through this Jeſus; for the excellencies and perfections of God do all ſtand againſt you and your ſalvation by any other way: but in this Jeſus he can ſave you to the honour of all his truth, and the praiſe of all his other perfections; *I am*

the way, ſays Chriſt, *no man cometh to the Father but by me:* and to walk in this way, as ye have received him, is juſt, having received him to be the way to the Father, to be ſtill coming nearer and nearer to God in this way, till ſalvation be complete, and till you come to *the end of your faith, the ſalvation of your ſoul.*

(2.) As ye have received him as a Jeſus, ſo walk in him *before the world*, by giving evidence in your converſation that this Jeſus hath *ſaved you*, and *called you with a holy calling;* and by ſetting him forth, as you can, to all that are about you, that he is an excellent Saviour, *the chief among ten thouſands:* that he is an able Saviour, *mighty to ſave:* and that he is a complete Saviour, a perfect Jeſus. Tell your children, families, friends, and all that you can have regular acceſs to do good unto, that religion is no fancy; but that *which you have heard and ſeen, and handled, of the word of life, declare unto them*, that they may have fellowſhip with you, if they hear; that you have ſeen a glory in Chriſt that they never ſaw; and felt a ſweetneſs that they never felt, a *joy unſpeakable*, and a *peace that paſſed all underſtanding*, which they are ſtrangers unto: it may ſtir them up to ſay, as it is, Zech. viii. 23. *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* Sirs, a ſervant will commend his maſter that may be little worthy of commendation; and will not you commend a Jeſus who have received him as ſuch, and walk in his name? Micah iv. 5. *For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.* Again,

3. Have you received him as a LORD? This is another letter of his name in the text; and theſe three letters of his name, Chriſt, Jeſus, the Lord, point him out beyond all other names in the world. Have you, I ſay, received him as a LORD? Then walk in him as a Lord, otherwiſe you walk not in him as you have received him. The true believer doth not only receive Chriſt as a Jeſus, and Saviour; but alſo as a Lord, and Governor. Many would divide betwixt his ſalvation and his dominion; they would have Chriſt as a Saviour, to ſave them from wrath; but not as a Lord, to deſtroy their

their luſts and ſin: but the true receiver of Chriſt is as weary of the load of corruption, as he is weary of the load of condemnation; and therefore not only being weary of condemnation, would he have Chriſt as a Saviour, but being weary of corruption he would have Chriſt as a Lord: and indeed when the heart would have water as well as blood, then it is in a right temperature? when the man would have water to purify the heart, as well as blood to pacify the conſcience, this argues honeſt receiving; for Chriſt comes by *water* and *blood*, 1 John v. 6. He comes not only to juſtify, but alſo to ſanctify; he comes not only as a Jeſus, to ſave by price; but alſo as a Lord, to ſave by power.

Now, have you received Chriſt in the capacity of a Lord? Then ſo walk in him as he is a Lord, and as ye have received him. The reſt of the world give evidence that they never received him as a Lord, by their practically ſaying, that they *will not have this man to reign over them:* but know, man, that he will never be a Jeſus to ſave you, if he be not alſo a Lord to conquer you, and reign over you; and you can never receive him as a Jeſus, and reject him as a Lord, without being rejected of him in both theſe capacities; for he will not be a Jeſus where he is not a Lord. But you, believers, who have received Chriſt as a Lord, are you walking in him as theſe that have thus received him, and giving evidence that ye have received him as a Lord, before *God* and the *world?* Surely, if it be ſo, it will ſome way appear by the language of your *hearts*, and the language of your *lives*. The language of your hearts will be, *O Lord, other lords have have had dominion over me; but now by thee only will I make mention of thy name:* Oh! may Chriſt be the Lord of my heart, and of all the thoughts of my heart, ſo as they may be captives to the Son of God; and of all the affections of my heart, ſo as they may terminate upon him alone; and of all the deſires of my heart, ſo as that they may go out after him. Why, the reſt of the world ſhew they never received him as a Lord, becauſe the devil, the world, and the fleſh, have the whole of their hearts, their thoughts, affections, and deſires, being wholly taken up with vaniſhing

niſhing worldly luſts, idols, and trifles. But though the world may have much of a believer's heart ſometimes, yet it hath but the white of the egg, as it were, Chriſt hath the yoke of the heart of that man; his top and ſuperlative thoughts and deſires, becauſe he hath taken Chriſt for the Lord of his heart.—Again, if you have received Chriſt as a Lord, then you will ſo deſire to walk in him, by ſaying, O let him be the Lord of my *tongue!* while others are ſaying, *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* and ſo looſing their tongues againſt heaven, by curſing, ſwearing, railing, reproaching: but, O ſays the man that hath received Chriſt the Lord, May Chriſt be the Lord of my tongue, and may it be occupied in his ſervice, in praying, praiſing, and edifying diſcourſe upon all occaſions, Sabbath and working-days. Many by their carnal diſcourſe and converſation, and by their evil and unprofitable communication, give evidence that it is not Chriſt, but the devil, that is lord of their tongues.—Again, if you have received Chriſt as a Lord, then you will ſo deſire to walk in him as to make him Lord of your *time*, ſo as not to ſquander it away with idle company, idle viſits, idle diverſions; as if it were good for nothing but to be caſt away upon any trifle; but you will deſire and endeavour to *walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time.* Many ſhow that Chriſt is not their Lord, by living as if they were lords of their own time and talents, which yet are but lent of the Lord, who ſays, *Occupy till I come.*—If you have received him as a Lord, then ſo to walk in him, is to make him Lord of your *life*, ſo as to live to him; the Lord of your ſouls and bodies, ſo as to glorify him in your ſouls and bodies which are his. Others live as if they were lords of their own life, lords of their own ſouls, and might caſt them away at random; and lords of their own bodies, and might defile them with drunkenneſs and whoredom as they pleaſe; an evidence that Chriſt is not their Lord.—If you have received him as a Lord, then ſo to walk in him, is to make him Lord of your *conſciences*, and the Lord of your *light*, ſo as not to enſlave your light and conſcience to any man on earth, any devil in hell, or any idol in the world. Many give evidence

evidence that Chriſt is not their Lord, by croſſing their light and conſciences for a trifle; whereas if Chriſt were the Lord of their light and conſciences, they would die in his cauſe rather than put out his candle which he hath kindled in their breaſt.—Again, if you have received him as a Lord, you will ſo walk in him as to make him the Lord of your *wills*, he having made you willing in the day of power: whatever remaining enmity or rebellion of will take place, yet your habitual deſire will be to have your will in ſubjection to his will, whether preceptive or providential, without fighting againſt his precept, or freting againſt his providence; at leaſt every fighting and freting thought will be matter of exerciſe to you, while your ſoul's deſire will be to have a due ſubjection to his precept, and ſubmiſſion to his providence. The reſt of the world give evidence that Chriſt is not their Lord, becauſe they are ſuch as carry as if they were lords of their own wills; their wills were never ſubdued.—Again, if Chriſt be received as a Lord, you will ſo walk in him as to make him the Lord of your *comforts* and *enjoyments* in a world, ſo as to bleſs him when he gives or takes, ſaying, *It is the Lord that giveth, the Lord that taketh, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* Take worldly comforts away from a man that never took Chriſt for his Lord, he will cry, *O ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* But the believer will ſay, even with reſpect to ſpiritual, as well as outward comforts, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good to him;* If he himſelf be my Lord, let him diſpoſe of me and mine as he will.—If you have received Chriſt as your Lord, then ſo walk in him as to make him Lord of your *graces*, who gives grace, and the exerciſe of it, as he pleaſes; and ſo your deſire will be to be ſtrong, not in yourſelves, or your own grace, but *ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt*, ſaying, if you want any grace in exerciſe, O! he is the Prince exalted by the right hand of God, to give it, and therefore to him will I look for it; or if you have any grace, O! it is not of me, it is *by grace I am what I am.*—You will own him alſo as the Lord of your *duties*, and the Lord of *ordinances*, that only can put a bleſſing in them for your good;

good; and as the Lord your righteouſneſs, in whom alone you can have acceptance; and the Lord your ſtrength, from whom alone you can have aſſiſtance: they that perform all their duties in their natural ſtrength, and ſo think to have acceptance of God, and favour with him upon their doing ſo, they both put themſelves in the room of the Lord their ſtrength, and their duties in the room of the Lord their righteouſneſs.——In a word, if you have received Chriſt as the Lord, you will walk in him by making him the Lord of your *faith*. The falſe apoſtles made Moſes the lord of their faith and obedience equal with Chriſt; and therefore they joined the Moſaical ceremonies with the doctrine of Chriſt; but the Coloſſians had received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and ſo they are called to walk in him as they had received him. Some make the church Lord of their faith; they believe as the church believes, or as this or that man believes, which ſhews that Chriſt is not their Lord. Some make the devil the Lord of their faith, they believe the devil rather than the God of truth, and the devil, the Father of lies, learns them to believe a lie: ſee 2 Theſſ. ii. 11, 12. Some make their reaſon the lord of their faith, they believe no more than their carnal reaſon can digeſt. But the true believer makes Chriſt the Lord of his faith; and the veracity of Chriſt the ground of it, and the doctrine of Chriſt the rule of it: It is true, the devil, and the believer's remaining unbelief, wage war againſt his faith, and ſeek to be lords of his faith; and it is a ſhame that the believer, in the day of battle, ſhould yield to any other lord, and let his faith, hope, and confidence fall to the ground: It is a marvellous fault in believers to call the love of God, and the truth of God in queſtion upon every occaſion by unbelief. Faith is the believer's ſhield, and hope his helmet, Eph. vi. 16. Now, would they not be very fooliſh who would wear their ſhield and helmet when there is no war nor ſtir; and as ſoon as ever they ſee an adverſary coming, or a battle beginning, then to caſt away their ſhield and helmet, and to do ſo uſually? Why, even ſo it is with many, perhaps, true believers; they will talk of their faith and hope in a time of proſperity

ſperity and eaſe, when all is in peace, and no ſeeming war from heaven or hell; then they wear their ſhield and helmet: but when war comes, when affliction comes, and temptation comes, then they childiſhly caſt away both their faith and hope, both their ſhield and helmet; and till their ſenſe and reaſon be ſatisfied, they will not be perſuaded. Oh! how diſhonouring is this to the Lord, whom ye have taken to be the Lord of your faith, the Captain of your ſalvation. To walk in Chriſt as ye have received him for a Lord, is to make him the Lord of your faith, in ſpite of the devil and the world, who ſeek to lord it over you and your faith.—— Finally, if you have received him as your Lord, you will ſo walk in him, as to make him the Lord of your *obedience*. Others by obeying the devil, by obeying their luſts and idols, and by obeying the ſinful commandments of men, ſhow that Chriſt is not the Lord of their obedience. But, believer, if you walk in Chriſt, as you have received him, you give evidence that he is the Lord whom you obey and ſerve; ſaying, with Joſhua, *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* And then, let it be the language of your life and converſation before the world, that Chriſt is your Lord. If you would judge of yourſelves that Chriſt is your Lord, it is even to be tried by your ſubjection to him, and his ſubduing of ſin in you. The higher the Sun of righteouſneſs is riſen, the ſhorter will the ſhadows of your ſin and corruption be. If the world judge of your receiving of Chriſt, as a Lord, and of your faith, they will judge it by your walk and converſation, and by your works, as I ſaid before, upon the ſecond head.

2*dly*, I come, as I propoſed, to obſerve all the *manifold particulars* comprehended under, and deduceable from, theſe generals in the text; and in all theſe we may further view the proportion that our walk ſhould bear to our faith *objectively* conſidered. Now, theſe generals in the text comprehend all the particular capacities wherein he is held forth in the goſpel; and to name all theſe, at preſent, were impracticable: we offer but ſome of them for inſtances, and yet ſhall endeavour, through grace, not altogether to ſcrimp or ſcroof over

the matter, that we may hold forth this Lord Jeſus Chriſt as a full Saviour, anſwering all the caſes that any poor ſinner can be brought into.

Now, you know, that Chriſt is to be received *as he is offered in the goſpel*, according to your Catechiſm, which ſays, "That faith in Jeſus Chriſt, is a receiving and "reſting upon him alone for ſalvation, as he is offered "in the goſpel:" The *receiving* relates to an *offering*; and he is to be received *as* he is offered, and then walked in *as* he is received. The queſtion then is, *How is he offered in the goſpel*, or *in what capacity*, that we may know further how he is to be received, that ſo being thus received, he may be thus walked in? Well, his being offered as a CHRIST, a JESUS, a LORD, as I have ſhewed already, comprehends theſe following particulars; and while we are telling you in what capacity Chriſt is offered, O look to the Lord to give you grace to receive him as he is offered; that having received him in theſe capacities, you may walk in him.

1. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Prophet* and *Teacher*, that being thus received ye may ſo walk in him. Is there any poor, blind, ignorant ſouls here, that know nothing of God, or Chriſt, or the covenant of grace? Behold, Chriſt is offered to you in the capacity of a Prophet that hath *compaſſion on the ignorant*, ſaying, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. xi. 29. Never will you learn till you be bound and entered to Chriſt; for, *Who teacheth like him?* Job xxxvi. 22. Miniſters may preach, but they cannot give you a capacity to learn; but Chriſt can give you a heart to know, as well as an ear to hear; for he gives eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and underſtanding to the ſimple. What is the reaſon that there is ſo much preaching, and ſo little ſpiritual profiting, and ſpiritual life? It is even becauſe Chriſt, the great Prophet, is ſo little with us, 2 Kings iv. 31. *There was neither voice nor hearing* by the prophet's ſtaff, until the prophet came and ſtretched himſelf upon the dead child: even ſo it is here, the ſtaff of a preached word does not the buſineſs, till the great Prophet come. Now, have you entered yourſelves to be

his

his ſcholars? Have you received him as a Prophet? Then, ſo walk in him by daily improvement of him in that capacity, to enlighten your underſtanding, ſaying, *Lord, I have heard by the hearing of the ear, but little have mine eyes ſeen of thee:* I have been long in Chriſt's ſchool, but made little profficiency: O come and teach me to profit! let my eyes be opened, that, in the ordinances of thy inſtitution, I may ſee the glory of God, the vileneſs of ſin, the beauty of Chriſt, and the excellency of his righteouſneſs.—Thus having received him as a Prophet, ſo walk ye in him, by coming always for more and more inſtruction from him.

2. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Prieſt*, that being thus received ye may ſo walk in him. How ſweet is this offer of Chriſt to all poor things that are wreſtling with the guilt of ſin, and the debt they owe to the juſtice of God! for it is only in Chriſt that God is well pleaſed, even in him *whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of them that believe in Jeſus.* They that believe in Jeſus, the propitiation, have gotten all their debt paid; and God's honeſty and fidelity is ſuch, that he will never crave the debt over again. Chriſt is offered as a Prieſt for reconciliation, and a Prieſt for interceſſion. They that take hold of Chriſt as a Prieſt, they have nothing ado in heaven but they are ſure to have it done; for, there *he makes continual interceſſion for us.* Are you ſo vexed with temptations that you cannot get a compoſed thought in duty? Here is refreſhment from the preſence of the Lord, even a Friend in heaven, who never gives over to make interceſſion. —Now, have you received Chriſt as a Prieſt? Then, ſo walk in him, by daily improving him, his ſatisfaction and interceſſion, as the ground of your peace with God, pardon of ſin, and acceptance in every performance.

3. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *King* and a *Captain*, that being thus received, ye may ſo walk in him. Behold! he is held forth as a King, to ſubdue, by his power; to conquer,

by his grace; and defend, by his providence, from all temptations without, and corruptions within: and as a Captain, even the Captain of our ſalvation, who hath good ſkill to lead on in the battle, and victory is ſtill upon his ſide. In Pſal. xci. 4. there you ſee he hath *wings* wherein you may truſt, and *his truth ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler; thou ſhalt not be afraid of terrors by night, nor for the arrows that fly by day.* He is a Captain whoſe name is, the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, the *mighty God*, the *Prince of peace*; a *Prince exalted by the right-hand of God, to give repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins.* Now, have you received him thus as a Prince, a Captain of ſalvation? So walk in him, by employing him ſtill to ſubdue all your ſins, and to defend you from all ſpiritual and temporal evils. To defend you from all *ſpiritual* evils; for, you *wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places*; therefore, *be ſtrong in the Lord*, Eph. vi. 10, 12.; *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds*, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. To defend from all *temporal* evils: But here a queſtion may be moved, How doth this Captain defend his ſoldiers from temporal evils, calamities, and afflictions? To which we reply, It is even by taking away the ſting of them. Some may think, how are the Lord's people ſupported under the temporal evils they are meeting with? Why, the everlaſting arms of Jehovah are underneath them, and that is enough. If the Lord ſee fit that temporal goods be taken from them, he makes it up an hundred fold in giving them ſpiritual goods. They would count it good intereſt who get ten of the hundred; but, behold! the people of God get a hundred fold in this life; and for any loſs in temporals they get it repaired in ſpirituals, as in the intimation of the pardon of ſin, and there is gold for copper. Many know not how the Lord ſupports his people under the difficulties they are brought into in this world; but he hath pledged his word to defend them from all temporal and ſpiritual evils, and he never failed in his word, wherein he hath ſaid, *The place of their defence ſhall be the munition*

of

of rocks.—Now, to receive Chriſt as a King and Captain to rule and defend, is to receive him as he is offered; and to improve him daily for this end, is to walk in him as we have received him.

4. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of an *Ark* and a *Refuge*, that being thus received, we may ſo walk in him. He is held forth as an Ark and a Refuge. Now, have you received him as an Ark, that only can ſave you from drowning by the flood of God's wrath, ſaying, "Lord, there is no other "ark to ſave me but thee, for I am ſhipwrecked in A-"dam, and there is no plank, but Chriſt, to bring me "to ſhore?" Have you therefore claſped to him by the hand of faith, ſaying, *Lord, ſave me, or elſe I periſh?* Why then, having thus received him, do you ſo walk in him; keep within your Ark, and abide in him, ſeeking no other ark, and repoſing confidence no where elſe; this is to walk in him as ye have received him.—Have you received him as a Refuge and hiding-place, Iſa. xxxii. 2. ſaying, "Lord, I flee to thee to hide me; for "the avenger of blood, the law and juſtice of God, are "at my heels purſuing me; and if they find me afar "off from thee, I am ſlain without mercy; the clifts "of the Rock are my only hiding-place, which I take "to be a ſafeguard to me?" Well then, ſo walk ye in him, by taking ſhelter ſtill in this ſanctuary.

5. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Cautioner* or *Surety*, that being thus received we may ſo walk in him. There are two things requiſite in a cautioner, and both are to be found in Chriſt: The one is that he be *ſolvendo*, able to pay all the debt; and the other is that he be willing, as well as able, to undertake the debt. Now, Chriſt is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that come to God by him*, Heb. vii. 25. and all comers are welcome; *Whoſoever will let him come:* q. d. the will ſhall not be wanting on my ſide. Now, have you, as a bankrupt-debtor, received Chriſt as a Surety, ſaying, "Lord, I owe many thouſands more "than I can pay, but thou haſt a ſufficient ranſom to "pay all my debt; and I flee to thee as my Surety, that "I be not ſeized by juſtice, and dragged to the priſon

"of

" of hell." Have you thus received him as a Surety? Then ſo walk in him by employing him ſtill as a Surety for debt and duty both; for clearing your conſcience with reſpect to all your debt, and for carrying your ſoul honourably through every duty, and doing all your works in you and for you.

6. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of an *Advocate*, that being thus received we may ſo walk in him; *Theſe things I write to you, that ye ſin not; but if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. Well is it with the poor ſoul that hath many challenges for ſin and guilt, and is ſadly exerciſed therewith, when yet it can put its caſe in the hand of him who is an Advocate with the Father; he can fully anſwer and propoſe able defences againſt all challenges from conſcience. But, alas! I fear there are many ſleeping conſciences among us. However, freedom from all challenges is only by the blood of Chriſt, and the faith of his advocating our cauſe with the Father; and well is it with us that we have a righteous Jeſus, a ſinleſs Jeſus, for our Advocate, who can comfort under the ſaddeſt diſcouragement, and relieve from the ſaddeſt intricacy; for, he underſtands all heart-ſecrets, his underſtanding being infinite: and he is not lordly in his employment. There is much lordlineſs among earthly advocates, and great men of that profeſſion; you muſt come and wait at their gates, with hat in hand, and perhaps never be the better; for advocates with us may be honeſt, and yet loſe a good cauſe: but here is an Advocate in your offer, to be received by you, who never loſt a cauſe that was put in his hand.—Now, have you received him as an Advocate? Then ſo walk ye in him, by ſtill employing him in that capacity, ſaying, " Lord, my crimes " are great, my cauſe is bad, but never a cauſe miſ- " carried that thou didſt take in hand: Oh! let every " one of thy wounds be as ſo many open mouths to " plead for me; let thy blood ſpeak, that *ſpeaks better* " *things than the blood of Abel.*"

7. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel, in the capacity of a *Phyſician*, that being thus received we may

may ſo walk in him. We are full of plagues, maladies, ſores, and ſpiritual diſeaſes. Chriſt is exhibited to us as a Phyſician that hath ſkill of all diſeaſes, and can heal them all be what they will; Pſal. ciii. 3.—*Who healeth all thy diſeaſes:* he knows the right time of applying the healing word; Pſal. cvii. 21. *He ſent his word, and healed them; and delivered them from their deſtructions:* He heals with his own blood, and mixes his own blood with the word, a ſtrange mixture and compound to be a healing potion; for, he ſeals the word with his blood. Many are whole, and ſee no need of the Phyſician; they are whole hearted; their hearts were never pierced with an arrow of legal conviction. But, if you have ſeen your malady, and prized the remedy; if you have received Chriſt as a Phyſician, then ſo walk ye in him, by coming ſtill with your broken bones to his door, ſaying, "Lord, here lies a Job full of boils, a Lazarus "full of ſores at thy gate; here a paralytic hand; here "a blind eye; here a hard heart; here is a plague, and "there is a wound; here is my atheiſm, ignorance, "enmity, unbelief; Oh! heal, heal; let me have a "touch of thy garment, and I ſhall be whole."—Now, if you have received Chriſt as a Phyſician, to continue in the improving of him thus, is to walk in him as ye have received him.

8. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Head* and *Huſband*, that being thus received we may ſo walk in him. Chriſt is offered in the goſpel as a friend in the room of all friends, a *friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother;* a huſband to the widow, a father to the fatherleſs, and a ſtay to the orphan; *When my father and mother forſaketh me, the Lord will take me up*, Pſalm xxvii. 10. And Jer. xlix. 11. *Leave thy fatherleſs children upon me, I will preſerve them alive; and let thy widows truſt in me;* and again, *Thy Maker is thy huſband.* Our Lord hath a kind heart to the widow and orphans; for, he is an ocean of love, and a fountain of mercy, and he hath a liberal hand towards them; for *he gives durable riches and righteouſneſs;* and *I will fill their treaſures*, Prov. viii. 21. All the ſilver and gold in the world cannot fill one's heart; but, ſays Chriſt, *I will*

will fill their treaſures. Let a graceleſs man have the greateſt ſubſtance in the world, he is but a poor miſerable wretch; but the pooreſt ſoul, married to Chriſt, hath *durable riches;* yea, *unſearchable riches*, Eph. iii. 8. Take the greateſt prince and monarch in the world, a few figures in arithmetic will count all his wealth, and all that he is worth; but all the arithmetic in the world cannot count the believer's ſtock, who hath Chriſt for his Friend and Huſband; for, it is the *the unſearchable riches of Chriſt.* They that are ill friended in the world, may be ſupplied here; Chriſt is offered as a Friend, a Head, and Huſband.—Now, have you received him as a Head, and Huſband? Then ſo walk in him. Have you received him as ſuch ſome time a day, when you was brought to ſay, "Lord, though I be the moſt deformed, black, and unworthy bride that ever was, having nothing but poverty, debt, and danger to recommend me to thee; yet ſince thou, who art *the chief among ten thouſands*, art content to match with me, behold! I ſay, AMEN to that marriage-covenant, deſiring to aſſent to all the articles of it."—Have you thus received him, I ſay, as a Head and Huſband? Then ſo walk ye in him by maintaining the relation, and ſaying, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his;* and again, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine*, Song vi. 3. Let me ſee more and more, that neither death nor hell, ſin or Satan ſhall be able to looſe the marriage-knot; and let me have ſweet communion and fellowſhip with this glorious Head, and love-communications, and love-viſits from this glorious Huſband.—Thus you may come to walk in him as ye have received him.

9. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Helper* and *Reliever*, that being thus received we may ſo walk in him and improve him. He is offered, I ſay, as a Helper of the needy, and a Reliever of the burdened ſoul; he is therefore declared to be a *preſent help in time of trouble*, who gives grace to help in time of need; and with reſpect to all burdens ſays, *Caſt thy burden on the Lord, and he will ſuſtain thee.* Now, have you received him as a *Helper?* Then ſo walk ye in him by ſtill taking his help, and employing him

him to help you, ſaying, " Lord, I have deſtroyed my-
" ſelf, but in thee only is my help; help me in reſpect
" of deliverance from the mire of ſin and miſery into
" which I have caſt myſelf; help me in reſpect of ſupply
" out of thy fulneſs, for never a poorer wretch came to
" thy door than I; not a penny of grace is there left to
" help me, nor a crumb to keep in my life: Oh! let
" me not go from thy treaſure-houſe without an alms;
" for *there is bread enough in thy houſe and to ſpare:*
" though I be a dog, let me not go without a crumb."
Thus by faith and prayer you may walk in him as a Helper, if you have received him as ſuch.—Again, have you received him as a *Reliever?* (to put both theſe together that are ſo nigh of kin) Then ſo walk in him by employing him ſtill to relieve you of your burdens, ſaying, " Oh! ſin is heavier than a milſtone, and how
" many of theſe milſtones are on my back! Angels
" cannot free me of my burdens; for the burden of
" one ſin ſunk many thouſands of them to the bottom-
" leſs pit: ſaints cannot do it, they have burdens e-
" nough of their own; nay, the whole creation cannot
" bear my burden; for it groans under the weight of
" me and it: but, Lord, art not thou the Rock, the
" mighty Rock, on whom God hath laid the help of
" poor ſinners? *The Lord hath laid on him the iniqui-*
" *ties of us all;* and there I roll my burden, even upon
" this Burden-bearer: let me be eaſed, for the Rock
" can bear it without any difficulty."——In this way, having received him as a Reliever and a Burden-bearer, you are to improve him, and ſo to walk in him.

10. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is offered in the goſpel in the capacity of a *Shepherd*, that being thus received we may ſo walk in him. See Iſa. xl. 11. *He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd; he ſhall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his boſom, and gently lead thoſe that are with young.* Chriſt is held forth in the goſpel as the *wiſe* Shepherd that knows his ſheep, and puts his mark upon them, and ſeals them; *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his;* they are ſealed by the Holy Spirit of promiſe.—He is the *careful* Shepherd that hath a fold for

them; *Other ſheep I have that are not of this fold, them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice.*—He is the *faithful* Shepherd, that rejoiceth in the thriving of his flock, and will give a good account of all the ſheep; hence he ſays, *This is the will of my Father, that of all he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up at the laſt day*, John vi. 39.; and he will at that day ſeparate the ſheep from the goats. — He is the *kind* Shepherd, that feeds, and leads, and heals, and watches, and waters, and defends, and gathers his flock.—Now, have you received Chriſt as a Shepherd to perform theſe kind offices towards you? Then ſo walk ye him by depending on him for the continual communication of that paſtoral care. Faith is called a returning to the Shepherd of our ſouls, 1 Pet. ii. 25. *Ye were as ſheep going aſtray, but are returned to the Shepherd and Biſhop of your ſouls.* Now, the life of faith, and walking in him in this capacity, is juſt a remaining with him, and depending on him as a Shepherd. It is depending on him as a Shepherd to *feed* you; for, he feeds his flock as no other ſhepherd doth; he feeds them upon a green paſture, and the paſture is himſelf; John x. 9. *I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he ſhall be ſaved; and he ſhall go in and out, and find paſture:* compare this with John vi. 51. *I am the living bread that came down from heaven; the bread that I give is my fleſh, which I give for the life of the world.*—It is a depending on him as a Shepherd to *lead* you; *The Lord is my Shepherd, I ſhall not want. He leadeth me by the ſtill waters: he leadeth the blind in a way they know not;* he maketh darkneſs light before them; he guides them by his counſel, and brings them to his glory: and if you walk in him, you take him for your guide, and employ him as your guide to give you counſel, becauſe he is the *wonderful Counſellor.*—It is a depending on him as a Phyſician to *heal* you; but of Chriſt as a Phyſician I ſpoke already.—Again, it is depending on him as a Shepherd to *watch* over you; for he is the watchful Shepherd that watches his flock night and day; *the watch-man of Iſrael ſlumbers not nor ſleeps:* he never gives ſo much as a nap, for then we were undone, in regard Satan never ſleeps, and enemies are never

ver idle.—It is a depending on him as a Shepherd to *water* you; he waters his flock as well as feeds them; and as he feeds them with his fleſh, ſo he waters them with his blood, and with the influences of his Spirit: here is the *river, the ſtreams whereof make glad the city of God:* he *pours water on him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground.* — It is a depending on him as a Shepherd to *protect* you; for he defends his flock from all wolves, from all harm and injury: know you what the devil ſaid of Job? though he be the father of lies yet he ſpake a truth, when he would gladly have had God's hand of protection removed from Job, chap. i. 10. *Doth Job ſerve God for nought? haſt thou not made an hedge about him and his houſe, and all that he hath on every ſide?* I believe there are many of you know not that the devil is going about your doors ſeeking to devour you; but here is the mercy of all the flock of Chriſt, that their Shepherd hath ſet an hedge about them, that nothing may harm them; neither can violence touch them without his ſpecial permiſſion and order, and that for their advantage; for, *all things ſhall work together for their good.*—Finally, it is to depend upon him as a Shepherd to *gather* you; *He gathers the lambs with his arms:* they go aſtray many times, and wander ſo far away that they ſeem to be quite loſt; but *he ſeeks and ſaves that which is loſt:* and he hath a long arm to gather them, and bring them back to himſelf, that they may get a mark anſwerable to his gracious care in reducing them; Iſa. lxii. 12. *Thou ſhalt be called, Sought out, a city not forſaken.* Have you received him then as a Shepherd? So walk ye in him as to employ him to gather you from all your far wanderings; your wandering thoughts, your wandering words, your wandering affections, your wandering converſations; ſaying, with the Pſalmiſt, Pſalm cxix. 176. *I have gone aſtray like a loſt ſheep, ſeek thy ſervant;* verſe 10. *O let me not wander from thy commandments;* and if I wander, O bring me back, and *let thy hand be upon the man of thy right-hand. the Son of man whom thou haſt made ſtrong for thyſelf; and henceforth I will not go back: turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned; draw me, and I ſhall run after thee.*

Have you received him in the capacity of a *Mediator* and *Peace-maker?* Then ſo walk in him, by employing him ſtill to take up all quarrels between God and your ſoul, ſaying, "Lord, ſtand betwixt me and the flaming "ſword; and let me have the ſenſe of the Father's love, "the atoning blood of the Lamb; and bring the news "of peace to my ſoul."

Have you received him as the *Ranſomer* of captives? Then ſo walk in him, by employing him ſtill to aſſert your liberty, to knock off your fetters, to looſe your bands, and to bring your ſouls out of priſon, that you may ſerve and praiſe him.

Have you received him as a *Saviour?* Then ſo walk in him, by employing him to carry on your ſalvation to perfection; and to ſave you from ſin, from the law, from death, and wrath.

Have you received him as a *Sun*, as the *Sun of righteouſneſs?* Then ſo walk in him, by rejoicing in his light, and ſhunning all the darkneſs of ignorance and error; *O houſe of Iſrael, walk ye in the light of the Lord.*

Have you received him as your *righteouſneſs* and *ſtrength?* Then ſo walk in him, by going in the *ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, and of his only.*

I may add to all that has been ſaid, that Chriſt is offered as a *pattern* and *example.* Have we received him in that capacity? then let us ſo walk in him. The body muſt walk where the head walks; the body and head muſt walk where the feet walk; and the head having influence upon the body, the feet muſt walk in a conformity. They that have received Chriſt as a pattern and example, if they walk as they have received him, muſt, through grace, follow his example; that is, they are to follow him in his *faith;* for he truſted in his Father; ſo muſt we beware of caſting off the profeſſion of our faith, or deviating to error and hereſy.—They are to follow him in his *love*, Eph. v. 2. *Walk in love, as Chriſt alſo loved us: being followers of God as dear children.*—They are to follow him in his *holineſs; Be ye holy as I am holy.*—In his *zeal; The zeal of God's houſe hath eaten him*

him up, even his zeal for the glory of God.—He walked in a conformity to the *will* of God; did always the things that pleaſed him; ſought the glory of his Father in all that he did.—In his *activity*; he went up and down doing good; never reſted till he ſaid, *I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.* So we are not to *weary in well-doing*.—In his *meekneſs*, *patience*, and *humility*; *Follow me for I am meek and lowly*.—In his *boldneſs* and *conſtancy*, in adhering to the truth in ſpite of all oppoſition; *For the joy that was ſet before him, he endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame.* So we are to *take up the croſs and follow him.*——This is to walk in him as we have received him.

You may ſee what a large field of matter is here; there would be no end of ſpeaking of the way or the walk here, becauſe Chriſt is the way, and the walk ſuitable thereto is accordingly moſt extenſive.

Thus you ſee the *rule* of the believer's walk, and what *proportion* and *ſuitableneſs* his walk ſhould have to his receiving Jeſus Chriſt the Lord, and ſuitable to all the *capacities* wherein he receives him.

SERMON XXXVIII.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The fifth Sermon on this text.]

WE have, in the preceding diſcourſes, eſſayed to point out, in a great variety of particulars, in what capacity Chriſt is offered in the goſpel, and ſhewn what it is to walk in him, in theſe different capacities. We now go on,

IV. To the *fourth* general head propoſed in the method,

thod, which was, To ſpeak of the *connexion* betwixt the believer's *character* and the believer's *duty*, or betwixt *receiving Chriſt*, and *walking in him;* where we promiſed to enquire into the *order* of the connexion, and the *reaſons* of it. Now, in ſpeaking to this head we may conſider, *firſt*, in general, how this *text*, and the *duties* therein called to, are *connected* with the *context;* and *ſecondly*, in particular, how the *parts* of the text are connected one with another, and ſo come more cloſely to the *order* of this connexion.

Firſt, Let us conſider, for clearing this matter the more evidently, how this *text*, and what we are called to therein, are *connected* with the *context*. The ſhort text is ſome what longer, if you take it with what went before, and what follows; for, texts of ſcripture are like the links of a chain that are faſtened together, ſome before, and ſome after. Look *before*, and then you will ſee, that the apoſtle ſpeaks to believers; in whom he notices their *order*, and the *ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith in Chriſt:* look *after*, and then you will ſee, that this *receiving of Chriſt*, and *walking in him*, are joined with a being *rooted and built up in him*, and *eſtabliſhed in the faith*. And thus looking to the ſcope round about the text, and viewing both ſides of it, I notice theſe two remarks for your edification.

Remark 1. That thoſe whom the apoſtle commends, for their *ſtedfaſtneſs in the faith*, yet he doth exhort to *walk in Chriſt*. See verſe 5th, compared with the text. And this teaches us this excellent leſſon, That Chriſt is to be lived, as well as known; to be lived in, as well as believed in. The beſt of believers hath need of the ſpur of exhortation ſtill to walk; proportionable to the knowledge and faith that a believer hath in Chriſt, anſwerably will he find the need of Chriſt, and of living and working in him: and ſo proportionable to his knowledge and faith, ſhould this living and walking in Chriſt be. A man may have much of the knowledge and faith of the Son of God, and yet walk very unanſwerable to that meaſure of faith and knowledge that he hath; and a man may have a little meaſure of faith and knowledge of Chriſt, and yet live in very much of that little knowledge

ledge and faith, by walking in Chriſt proportionably thereto. There are luſts to be mortified in the believer, as long as he lives; there are paſſions to be ſubdued by the Spirit, and graces to be quickened and blown up by the Spirit, that they go not out: This may take up the whole man, and there is no end of this work, till ſin be quite aboliſhed, and grace be perfected. And ſo there is work enough for the believer all his days: though he be eſtabliſhed in the faith, he will find work enough ſtill to be working and going on. Therefore, the beſt believers need the ſpur of exhortation, to quicken them to practical obedience. Suppoſe a man be highly advanced in the knowledge of Chriſt, ſurely the more knowledge he hath, the more doth he ſee into himſelf, and the more corruption will he ſee in himſelf than he ſaw before: as by the bright ſun that ſhines in at the window, we will ſee thoſe motes fly up and down, that we cannot ſee by the clear day light. The more light, the more a man ſees into himſelf, and ſo the more corruption does he find in him, than before he thought of. Yea, take any man that walketh in Chriſt, and he hath this property, the further he goes, the leſs he thinketh he hath gone: and it is a certain truth, a man that hath gone a great way forward in religious exerciſes, the leſs he thinks he has done: for the nearer he comes to God, the greater doth he find this God to be, and the knowledge of him ſtill the more myſterious; and the farther he dives into this depth, the deeper doth he find it to be. And therefore, even thoſe, that are commended for their *ſtedfaſtneſs of faith*, need to be exhorted to *walk in Chriſt*: here is walking, and walking further and further. If any man ſhould ſay, I care for no more than will bring me to heaven; this very thought ſhews the corruption and rottenneſs of his heart; and that he ſeeks grace to be ſaved, and not to be fruitful. It is a great flaw in a man's heart, in the very deſiring of grace itſelf, when he deſires grace to be ſaved, ſo as he may be glorified in heaven; and not to be fruitful, ſo as God may be glorified on earth. I ſhall not ſay but ſomething of this naughtineſs may be in the heart of a true believer; but ſurely, where-ever it is in its full power and dominion,

nion, it evidences the man to be no believer, to ſeek grace merely as it is a beneficial grace, to get heaven for himſelf; but not as it is a ſerviceable grace, to be laid out in the ſervice of God in Chriſt.—This is one remark from the precedent text.

Remark 2. Is from the ſubſequent context, That *walking in Chriſt*, and *being rooted, built up in him*, and *eſtabliſhed in the faith*, are coupled together: compare the text with verſe 7th. And ſo we are taking a look of the other ſide of the text, *walk in him, rooted, built up in him*, and *eſtabliſhed in the faith*. And theſe are coupled together two ways, both as to the *manner* of walking, and as to the *end* of walking: the *manner* of *walking in him*, ſo as to be alſo ROOTED *in him;* and the *end* of *walking in him*, ſo as to be ESTABLISHED *in the faith.*

(1.) They are coupled as to the MANNER of *walking in Chriſt;* for it is a *walking in him*, ſo as to be alſo *rooted* and *eſtabliſhed in him.* Why, here is walking, and yet a ſtanding ſtill, a being *rooted.* It is here juſt as it is with the foot of the compaſs; the one foot of the compaſs ſtands faſt in the centre, and the other goes round, and draws the line: ſo it is with the believer; as to his faith, he ſtands faſt and unmoveable in the matters of doctrine, that is the foot of the compaſs that keeps the centre and ſtands faſt; but as to his goſpel-obedience, or obeidential walking, according to the command in the law, in the hand of Chriſt, that is the part that moves forward, and indeed never ſtands. And thus the believer moves, and yet ſtands faſt; walks, and yet is rooted and eſtabliſhed. As it is with a man in walking, there is ſtill one foot ſtands, while the other moves, or elſe a man does not walk, but leap: ſo, many do not ſtand faſt in the faith, with one foot; nor walk in the truth, with the other foot, as it were; but they leap out of one doctrine to another, not being eſtabliſhed in the faith, nor walking in Chriſt, ſo as alſo to be rooted in him. And thus we may underſtand the ſcriptures that ſometimes injoin us to go forward, and ſometimes command us to ſtand faſt: you may thus reconcile the ſcripture that ſays, *Stand faſt in the faith;* and another ſcripture that ſays, *Run the race ſet before you:*

you: why, in the *way*, run; in the *truth*, ſtand. If a man ſtand ſtill in the way of obedience, ſuch a man ſtands when he ſhould run; but if he runs out of the faith or doctrine of the goſpel, this man runs when he ſhould ſtand. If a tree be removed to-day from this place, and tranſplanted to-morrow to another place; and ſo on from place to place, it drys, and cannot bear fruit: even ſo, the Chriſtian that changes from doctrine to doctrine, decays in fruitfulneſs; he is looſe, and not eſtabliſhed in the faith, and ſo cannot walk in Chriſt; for theſe two are coupled together, namely, *walking in him*, and being *rooted and eſtabliſhed in the faith.*—Thus they are connected as to the *manner* of walking in Chriſt.

(2.) They are coupled as to the END of *walking in him;* for, the end of *walking in Chriſt*, is to be *rooted and eſtabliſhed.* It is a remarkable promiſe made to poor feeble ones in Chriſt's houſe, John vii. 17. *If any man will do his will, he ſhall know the doctrine whether it be of God:* This doctrine is not man's, but God's. Now, how ſhall I know whether the doctrine be of God, or not? why, if you *do his will*, you ſhall know it; that is, by walking in Chriſt he ſhall get much experience: for, as true knowledge makes way for practice; ſo goſpel-practice makes way for more knowledge and experience. O but a practical Chriſtian, is the moſt experienced Chriſtian in the world! You may very eaſily obſerve, that a tree is not rooted in a day; but the more it grows upward, the more it is rooted; and the more it is rooted, the better it is: ſo, they that walk in Chriſt ſhall be confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the faith. You will never find a man of mere notional knowledge, that hath any rootedneſs or ſtedfaſtneſs; nay, but the practical Chriſtian comes to be more and more an experimental Chriſtian. He that *doth his will, ſhall know the doctrine:* the meaning is not, that our knowledge and experience is owing to our work; but that, where a man, through grace, is helped to practical religion, ſo as not to ſatisfy himſelf with notions and ſpeculations, but ſo as to ſubject himſelf to the preceptive will of the Lord, that man is in the high way of growing in knowledge, and

further experience.—Thus the text ſtands *connected* with the *context*.

Secondly, Let us conſider how the *parts* of the text ſtand *connected with one another*: *As ye have received the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſo walk ye him.* Here you ſee, *receiving of Chriſt*, and *walking in him*, are coupled together: what God hath joined, no man ſhould put aſunder, otherwiſe it is at his peril. And though theſe two cannot be ſeparated in reality, yet the moſt part of people ſeparate them in effect: ſome pretend that they receive Chriſt, and yet certainly they do not walk in him; and ſo, on the other hand, ſeem to walk in him, in ſome outward good life and works, and yet certainly do not receive Chriſt. Now, if you ſever theſe two ſorts of profeſſors from the reſt in the viſible church, thoſe that profeſs to receive Chriſt, and yet do not walk in him, and thoſe that ſeem to walk in him by their good works, and yet have not received him, you will find, that thoſe that truly receive Chriſt, and walk in him, are very thin ſown: for, as few of thoſe in ſcripture, that called Abraham, Father, were indeed his children; ſo our Lord tells us, as few of thoſe that pretend to Chriſt, are indeed Chriſtians. Look upon the greateſt part of the world this day, it is unchriſtian; becauſe they receive not Chriſt: look to the greateſt part of Chriſtendom, and they are unchriſtian too; becauſe they walk not in him, though they pretend to receive him: theſe two muſt be coupled, and the dividing theſe two, mars the whole. He is no Chriſtian that does not receive Chriſt; and he is no receiver of Chriſt, that doth not walk in him; and therefore he is no Chriſtian that doth not receive and walk in Chriſt: in a true Chriſtian theſe two meet, receiving and walking. It may well be ſaid of many, *The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Eſau*: Their voice is the voice of a Chriſtian, but their hands are the hands of an atheiſt, or an infidel. Where Chriſt is moſt named and profeſſed, without being truly received, there he is diſhonoured. Search the whole world over, and where will you find the moſt proud, the moſt cruel, the moſt ſelfiſh, the moſt carnal, wicked, and worldly perſons? it is even among

among notional and nominal Chriſtians, who, hearing of Chriſt, either profeſs to receive him, but never walk in him; or, fancy they walk in him, and yet never receive him.

If you aſk me, *Where is the moſt unſavoury dung-hill?* I anſwer, It is where the ſun ſhines hotteſt: ſo, in theſe days of the goſpel, where in the world will you find the greateſt ſins committed, or the moſt nauſeous dung-hill of ſinful corruptions? it is even where the ſun ſhines hotteſt, and where the goſpel ſhines brighteſt. Think not ſtrange to ſee, that where the goſpel ſhines moſt brightly, there the devil works moſt ſpitefully, that he may break this chain, *viz.* the *receiving of Chriſt*, and *walking in him:* when theſe two are cut aſunder, it ſpoils all.—Thus much for the connexion.

But now, the *order* of this connexion follows to be conſidered: it is firſt a *receiving of Chriſt*, and then a *walking in him:* receiving is firſt, in as much as the branch muſt firſt be in the vine, before it can bear fruit: there muſt be an inbeing, before there can be a fruit-bearing, John xv. 1,—5. There it is Chriſt's doctrine, and here it is the apoſtle's. Now, we muſt enquire into the *reaſons* of this order, that there muſt be a *receiving* BEFORE a *walking*, and a *walking* AFTER the *receiving*. We would therefore ſhew, 1. Why there muſt be a *receiving of Chriſt*, BEFORE there can be a *walking in him*. 2. Why there muſt be a *walking in him*, AFTER the *receiving him*.

1*ſt*, Why there muſt be a *receiving of Chriſt* BEFORE there can be a *walking in him*.

1. Becauſe *receiving of Chriſt* is that which *conſtitutes* and gives *being to a Chriſtian*. Now, we have a common rule, *eſſe* muſt go before *operare*; that *being* muſt go before *working*; *life* before *walking*. Now, if you aſk, *What it is that conſtitutes and gives being to a ſaint, to a Chriſtian, to a believer?* I reply, It is this *receiving of Chriſt*; it is by this means that we *become the ſons of God*; John i. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power,* [or PRIVILEGE,] *to become the ſons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* It is by this means, that we, having union with Chriſt, have the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; Phil. iii. 9. *That I may be found in him,*

not having mine own righteouſneſs, but the righteouſneſs of God by faith: firſt, we muſt be *found in him*, before we can have any thing from him; and this union is by a faith of his own operation: this gives the being and conſtitution; for, till we receive Chriſt, we are not unite to him, and ſo have no ſpiritual life or being. It is true, in regeneration, the Spirit of life comes in to the ſoul; but the firſt act of ſpiritual life is faith, whereby the ſoul cloſes with Chriſt, and ſo becomes a Chriſtian indeed. As the union of matter and form, makes a body; the union of body and ſoul together, makes a man; and the union of a man and Chriſt together, makes a Chriſtian; and ſap from this root makes him a growing one: ſo, it is not good fruit, that makes a good tree; but a good tree, that makes the good fruit: and as it is ſap from the root, and the reception of it, that makes the branch to bring forth; ſo it is not the fruit of works and obedience that conſtitutes a Chriſtian, or gives him a being, but it is the reception of Chriſt, the receiving of him as Jeſus the Lord; and therefore that muſt be firſt.

2. Becauſe *receiving of Chriſt* is the *riſe* and *ground* of *walking in him;* and therefore receiving is firſt, as the cauſe before the effect. A man may bring forth the fruit of works morally good, and may bring forth upon his own root, as a natural man; but he can never *walk in Chriſt*, until he do it in virtue of receiving Chriſt, and receiving ſap from him. As the fruit of a tree is the ſap of the root concocted; ſo walking and working in Chriſt, is juſt the ſap of the Spirit of grace, putting forth itſelf into obedience; and that ſap muſt be received from the root, ere it can be produced in fruit; and therefore receiving muſt go before walking. None can walk in Chriſt unleſs they be in him: as the branch cannot bear fruit in the tree, unleſs it knit to the ſtock; ſo we cannot walk in Chriſt, without being united unto him. Works and duties, though they be performed in a conformity to the law, as the rule; yet this is not walking in Chriſt, unleſs it be done by virtue from Chriſt, and drawn out of him. Conceive it thus; a man may write a copy by his own art and ſkill, and a

man

man may write with his hand by another man's guiding it; even ſo, out of moral principles, a man may ſhape his actions according to the law and rule; he may write this copy with his own hand: but then, as one that writes with his hand in another man's hand that guides it, ſo one that is in Chriſt, walks indeed in a conformity to the law as a rule, otherwiſe it is no walking aright in Chriſt; but he walks in the life and Spirit of Chriſt, he writes after the copy with his hand in the hand of Chriſt, being acted by theſe influences and graces of the Spirit, that through his union with him, are always flowing to him. And thus a believer's walking is diſtinguiſhed from all other walkings in the world, he being acted by the very Spirit and life of Chriſt: he bears fruit by the ſap and life, which he receives from the tree of life, to which he is united; and not upon the old ſtock from which he is tranſplanted.

3. The *third* reaſon, why *receiving of Chriſt* goes BEFORE *walking in him*, is, becauſe receiving of Chriſt is one of the *principal* things, whereby any ſoul can *honour God*. The world little conſiders this, how God is honoured by their taking Chriſt off his hand; how he is honoured by this act of faith in receiving of Chriſt: for, by receiving him, we renounce ourſelves, and all confidence in the fleſh. Now, while a man hath any thing to truſt to in his own opinion, he will never ſeek after Chriſt the Saviour; but when a man begins to count all his gain loſs, and can throw himſelf over board, that he may come to Chriſt only; how doth this glorify and honour God!—Again, when a *great ſinner*, that lies under an infinite load of ſin and guilt, notwithſtanding all diſcouragements from the multitude and magnitude of his ſins, though infinitely great, yet doth ſo value the truth of God's word, and lay ſuch ſtreſs upon the veracity of his promiſe, as to break through all diſcouragements, and throw his ſoul upon God's promiſe, ſaying, *If I periſh, I periſh;* what infinite honour doth this bring in to the crown of heaven!—Again, when a *benighted ſoul* ſees no light of comfort in all the world, and yet can throw himſelf upon a God in Chriſt, ſaying, *though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him;* this honours

nours God greatly: for, ſtill we may mark this at any time, the faith that carries the ſoul through the greateſt difficulties and contrarieties to God, doth bring the greateſt glory and honour to him. Men do not think they honour God, but by outward works of piety, equity, charity, and the like: but, however we ought to glorify God that way; yet God gets the greateſt glory by the ſtrongeſt faith. *Abraham was ſtrong in the faith, giving glory to God:* How did he honour God this way? Even by truſting God, notwithſtanding all unlikelihood, Rom. iv. 19, 20, 21. Yea, by faith God is ſo much honoured and glorified, that nothing pleaſes him without it; *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, Heb. xi. 6.

4. The *fourth* reaſon is, becauſe before a man receive Chriſt, he hath neither *power* nor *will* to *walk in him;* but by receiving of him, he hath both: before receiving of Chriſt he hath no power nor ability; but he is acted and enabled by receiving of Chriſt to walk in him. As it is impoſſible for a dead man to walk; ſo it is impoſſible for a man that hath not received Chriſt to walk in him. No unbeliever, no unregenerate man ever did, or can walk in Chriſt; ſuch a man is not in him, all his works are out of him. But, on the contrary, every man that hath received Chriſt by faith, is in Chriſt; and being in him, he hath all righteouſneſs and ſtrength in him, and ſo ability to walk in him: and he may *be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus; ſtrong in the Lord:* he hath alſo a new principle; *the ſeed of God in him.* And as he hath a power, ſo he hath a *will* to walk in him; for his enmity and antipathy againſt God and Chriſt is broken; ſo that it becomes as eaſy and pleaſant to walk in Chriſt, as before it was uneaſy, unpleaſant, and hateful. If water be poured out, it will run downward to the centre; but water metamorphoſed and transformed into air, would mount upwards, becauſe of its new principle; and it is impoſſible for it to come down: ſo here, before you receive Chriſt by faith, whereby you are united to him, it is impoſſible but that you ſhould go downward to your own centre, to ſeek yourſelves in what you do; but when a man hath another principle,

principle, he goes the quite contrary way, with as much eaſineſs as he did the other way; ſo it is with every believer, as far as he is under the influence of the new Spirit, that is put within him. And ſo you ſee why *receiving* is firſt.

2*dly*, Why there muſt be a *walking in him*, AFTER the *receiving of him*; and ſo we are come to the reaſons, why believers ſhould *walk in Chriſt as they have received him;* or why a GOSPEL-FAITH muſt have a GOSPEL-PRACTICE *. Why, it is every way reaſonable and neceſſary, and that is reſpect of God, and man, and ourſelves, and our faith.

1. The *firſt* reaſon, why they that *receive Chriſt* muſt *walk in him*, is in reſpect of GOD, that he may be glorified; and CHRIST, that he may be honoured. It is by walking in him that we glorify and honour him: the glory of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt is concerned here; for the glory of the FATHER, as the *end;* the SON, as the *way;* and the HOLY GHOST, as the *guide*, are all honoured by this goſpel-walk; John xv. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.* John xvii. 10.—*And I am glorified in them*, ſays Chriſt. And the believer being the temple of the Holy Ghoſt, ſurely he is glorified when his temple is not defiled, by a ſinful walk. In a word, it is a great affront upon Chriſt, not to walk in him as we receive him: it is the greateſt injury done to Chriſt; *By this they give great occaſion to the enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme*, 2 Sam. xii. 14. A wrong ſtep in a believer, is very diſhonouring to God, and makes enemies to blaſpheme the name of the Lord. Therefore,

2. The *ſecond* reaſon, why they that *receive Chriſt* are to *walk in him*, is in reſpect of MAN, that they may be edified, and brought to glorify God alſo: *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing your good works, may glorify God.* Men will not look in to your heart, to ſee your faith; nor up to your head, to ſee what knowledge you have; but down to your feet, to ſee what

* See what was ſaid on the *ſecond general head*, page 50, *&c.* Hereby the *power* of faith is ſeen, the *trial* of faith is made, the *beauty* of faith appears to others, and the *comfort* of faith accrues to ourſelves, *&c.*

for

for a walk you have: they cannot look to the ſap that is within, but they will look to the fruit that is without, and judge of the tree by the fruit, and of your faith by your works.

3. The *third* reaſon, why they that *receive Chriſt* are to *walk in him*, is in reſpect of YOURSELVES, who are believers, and receivers of Chriſt, that you may be confirmed; for you are to judge the truth of your faith, not by the degrees of your confidence, but by the degrees of your conqueſt over ſin, Satan, and the world, in a goſpel-walk; even as you may know the height of the ſun by the ſhortneſs of your ſhadow, rather than by the degrees of altitude; if the ſhadow be ſhort, the ſun is high; if the ſhadow be long, the ſun is low: ſo here, if the ſhadow of ſin and corruption be long, your faith is low; but if it is ſhort, your faith is in a more lively exerciſe. How can you have the comfort of faith, if you do not riſe and walk, as you have received him? If you do not walk, it is a ſign you never *received light*, 1 John i. 7.

4. The *fourth* reaſon, why they that *receive Chriſt*, are to *walk in him*, is in reſpect of FAITH itſelf: faith, where-ever it is, brings in this walk in point of neceſſity, congruity, obligation, and encouragement.

(1.) In point of *neceſſity*: It is native, as I ſaid, for a man that hath received Chriſt to walk in him; it implys a contradiction, not to walk in him, and yet to receive him; *How ſhall we that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein?* Rom. vi. 2. The believer is *dead, and his life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. iii. 3. If ye be dead and buried, united to Chriſt, in his death and burial, how can ye live in ſin? You can no more live therein, than a dead man can come back, and eat and drink in the world. Therefore, if you do not walk in Chriſt, ye plainly declare that your pretending to receive him, was but a cheat and a ſham; for, he that receiveth him muſt walk in him, and will walk in him, and cannot but walk in him. Why? he that receiveth Chriſt, receiveth him as a Jeſus and as a Lord: which infers two parts of practical religion; the fiducial part, which is a receiving him as a Jeſus, a Saviour; and the obediential part, which

which is a receiving him as a Lord, and ſo walking in him as a Lord and Law-giver: ſo that they who receive him, muſt walk in him.

(2.) In point of *congruity:* Is it not congruous to the ſoul's *deed* in receiving him? Did you not receive him as the way to the Father? Why then, if you walk not in him, you take another way, and look to another airth.—Is it not congruous to the *end* for which you received him? Did you receive him only to look to him a while, and then to let him go? No: if ever you received him, it was that you might abide in him.

(3.) In point of *obligation;* there is the ſtrongeſt obligation upon every man that receives Chriſt, to walk in him; even as in marriage, when two are married together, there is a mutual obligation they come under to thoſe duties that are required of each of them: ſo, a man, when he receives Chriſt, he is married to him, and ſo comes under the ſtrongeſt, and yet the ſweeteſt obligations: for, in the day of eſpouſals, the ſoul is made to ſay, as Jer. l. 5. *Come and let us join ourſelves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant, that ſhall not be forgotten:* It is a joining to the Lord as our ſtrength, to carry us on in the way wherein we ſhould go; ſo that we may be exalted to *mount up with wings as eagles, run and not weary, walk and not faint.*

(4.) In point of *encouragement;* the man that receiveth Chriſt, hath the greateſt encouragement, and incitement in the world, to walk in Chriſt: for he, receiving Chriſt, receiveth all things that can contribute for carrying him on in this way and walk. What does a man receive, when he receives Chriſt? 1. He receiveth the *pardon* of all his ſins; *In him we have redemption through his blood, even the remiſſion of ſin,* Col. i. 19. And what encouragement is this to walk in Chriſt! May not a man love much, who hath ſo much forgiven him? 2. When you receive Chriſt, you receive *peace* and *reconciliation with God; We have peace through the blood of his croſs,* Col. i. 19. And what encouragement is this, that you have to do with a reconciled God! O ſtrong encouragement to walk in him! 3. When you receive Chriſt, you receive grace; for, *Out of his fulneſs we re-*

ceive, and grace for grace. And what encouragement is this to walk in him, that you receive grace from him! Do you not receive him for this end, that you may have grace in him, and grace from him? And why then not walk in him as ye have received him? 4. When you receive Chriſt, you receive the *promiſe;* yea, all the promiſes of the new and well-ordered covenant; for, they *are all Yea and Amen in Chriſt.* He hath *given us exceeding great and precious promiſes,* ſaith the apoſtle Peter, 2 Pet. i. 4. And now, *Having theſe promiſes,* ſaith the apoſtle Paul, *let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God,* 2 Cor. vii. 1. 5. When you receive Chriſt, you receive the *Spirit;* and here is the principle of a holy walk: *I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes.* Is not this encouragement, to walk in him as ye have received him, that you have the Spirit dwelling in you as an inhabitant? 6. When you receive Chriſt, you receive the *adoption of children;* Rom. viii. 15. *Ye have received the Spirit of adoption.* And again, Gal. iv. 4, 5. *Becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying,* ABBA, *Father.* John i. 12. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* Is not this encouragement to be *followers of God as dear children?* 7. When you receive Chriſt, you receive a *right* and *title* to *eternal glory;* John xiv. 2, 3. *In my Father's houſe are many manſions;—I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again, and receive you to myſelf, that where I am, there you may be alſo.* And what encouragement is this to walk in him, in the joyful hope of walking in him in white for ever! 8. When you receive Chriſt, you receive *all things in him.* I cannot tell what you receive, or how much you receive, when you receive Chriſt; for he is *all in all;* and *in him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily,* Col. ii. 9. *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell,* Col. i. 19. *And in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge,* Col. ii. 3. He is all for preſent ſupport, and all for after happineſs: and if he be yours, *all is yours.* What more encouragement can be given to walk in him,

and

and improve him as your all?——Thus you ſee, why *walking in him* muſt go AFTER the *receiving;* and why believers in Chriſt are to walk in him.

Now, what ſay you of your Chriſtianity, man? you that profeſs to be a Chriſtian, that is, a receiver of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, do you ſo walk in him? I believe it to be a needful work to Un-Chriſt many that pretend to be in Chriſt: you know Chriſt, in his preaching, went about to Un-Moſes ſome; to bring the Jews from under the wings of Moſes, under whoſe name they did the works of the devil; and from under the wings of Abraham: he ſhows whoſe children they were, indeed not Abraham's, but the devil's. Even ſo, it were a needful work to Un-Chriſt ſome perſons, that pretend to be Chriſtians, and to bring them from under the wings of Chriſt, under whoſe wings they do the works of the devil: Surely, if ever Chriſt was received by you, ſo as to be in you, he would produce theſe graces in you, which he himſelf had, and which he himſelf preached, while he was here: but while men bring arguments from Chriſt, to ſhelter their baſe luſts and idols, their baſe ends and purpoſes, it is the greateſt diſhonour done to the name of Chriſt; for, *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his;* and, *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.*

Thus much for the fourth general head, *viz.* the connexion between the believer's *character* and his *duty;* or, between *receiving Chriſt,* and *walking in him.*

SERMON XXXIX.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The ſixth Sermon on this text.]

IF believers, who have received Chriſt, do not walk in him, none in all the world will; if they ſtand ſtill, who will go forward? Many there are in our day, that are like the ſun in Joſhua's time, that *ſtood ſtill;* nay, many worſe, like the ſun in Hezekiah's time, that went *backward ten degrees;* they have gone backward many degrees: few there are like the ſun, in its ordinary courſe, ſtill going forward; ſtill walking in Chriſt, as the ſun doth run in the firmament. It is true, as the ſun once ſtood ſtill, and another time went backward; ſo the ſaint may ſtand ſtill, and through temptation, be driven backward: but his denomination is to be taken from his ordinary courſe, and habitual walk. It was the commendation of Enoch, that he *walked with God:* and how ſhall one walk with God? It is by walking in Chriſt. And how ſhall one come to walk in Chriſt? It is by the means of receiving him, under the influence of heaven; *As you have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

V. The *fifth* thing was the *application* of the doctrine. Is it ſo, That it is the great and indiſpenſable duty of all true believers, who have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, to walk in him as they have received him? then hence many things might be inferred, and many uſes deduced: I ſhall confine myſelf to theſe four in a ſpecial manner. 1. For *information*, to inſtruct us in ſome precious truths. 2. For *reproof*, to convict us of ſome errors, both doctrinal and practical. 3. For *examination*, to try our faith and

and obedience. 4. And more eſpecially, for *exhortation*, to excite and direct us, both to receive Chriſt and walk in him.

Firſt, The *firſt uſe* is for *information*. Is it ſo, that a goſpel-principle, or a goſpel-faith, is the foundation of a goſpel-practice, then hence ſee,

1. The *nature* and *excellency* of the *goſpel;* it is juſt that whereby God makes an offer of Chriſt to us, and all ſalvation in him; for the receiving of Chriſt here, hath a relation to the offer. A receiving faith preſuppoſes an offering hand: now, Chriſt is offered to us in the goſpel; there is God's offering hand: but where is our receiving hand of faith? Alas! whence is it, that we cannot take Chriſt that is offered to us? Even becauſe our hand is full: the empty hand is a receiving hand; but our hands are ſo full of ſin, ſo full of the world, ſo full of ſelf-righteouſneſs, that we have not an empty hand, to receive what is offered to us, by the hand of free grace, in the goſpel: and we have no will to quit our hold of that, with which our hands are full; and hence cannot take a grip of Chriſt offered to us. However, herein lies the excellency of the goſpel, that it is a Chriſt, a Jeſus, a Lord that is offered to us therein: and the goſpel is to be preſſed on this account, becauſe, as all that reject it rejects Chriſt; ſo, all that receives it truly doth receive Chriſt in it. Human doctrine, however true, brings nothing, at beſt, but knowledge and ſpeculation to us: but goſpel-doctrine brings ſalvation to us; yea, the Saviour himſelf to our hand, to be received: and, when the offering hand of the goſpel, and the receiving hand of faith meets together, then the good work is begun.

2. Hence ſee the *nature* and *excellency* of *faith;* it is a receiver of *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, as he is held forth in the word and ſacrament. It is true, there is a difference between the receiving of Chriſt in the word, and the receiving of him in the ſacrament, *i. e.* in the Lord's ſupper. More generally, in the word, all ſinners are welcome to Chriſt, as a Saviour and Lord; and in the ſacrament, all believers are welcome to come to him anew. But more particularly, in the word we receive

Chriſt

Chriſt under an offer and a promiſe; but in the ſacrament, we receive him under a pawn, a pledge, and a ſeal. However, herein lies the nature and excellency of faith, that it is a fiducial reception of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord. You ſay you believe, man; but, what is it that you do believe? Is it only that God offers Chriſt to your faith? Why, ſurely there is more than a believing that Chriſt is offered to you: what is a poor man the richer for believing that one offers him a ſhilling? What is a condemned man the better for believing, that a pardon is offered to him? But, do you receive the offer?—It is true, many come not this length to believe truly, that God offers Chriſt to them in particular; and yet, where it is without any more, it is but the faith of the *truth* of the offer: you believe this to be a truth; and if you believe no more, that faith doth but ſerve to your juſt condemnation: it is not merely the truth-acknowledging, but the Chriſt-receiving faith that bringeth ſalvation. A woman may believe a man to be rich and honourable, and real in his ſuit; yet, that believed, doth not make marriage, but actual conſent to take him for a huſband: Even ſo, a man or woman may believe Chriſt to be a full, glorious, and ſuitable Saviour and Lord, and real in his ſuit and offer; but that believed, doth not make marriage and union to Chriſt, but actual conſent to take him for your Saviour, and your Lord.

3. Hence ſee, what is the glorious *object* of faith; and, therein alſo the difference between *ſaving* and *juſtifying* faith. Chriſt Jeſus the Lord is the object of faith; and faith, as it is ſaving, doth embrace Chriſt in all his offices, and in all theſe capacities, as Chriſt, Jeſus, the Lord. But now, there are two ſpecial branches of ſalvation, namely, *juſtification* and *ſanctification;* and theſe being two different things, faith acts upon Chriſt for them, in a different manner. Faith acts upon Chriſt for *juſtification*, as he is a JESUS; or by receiving him as a Jeſus: faith acts upon Chriſt for *ſanctification*, as he is a LORD; or by receiving him as a Lord. In juſtification, we receive him as a Jeſus, to be ſaved from the *guilt* of ſin; in ſanctification, we receive him as a Lord, to be delivered from the *power* of ſin. Now, though both theſe acts of

of faith go together, to make up ſaving faith; though they be inſeparable from one another, in the ſame faith; yet they differ, as the eye and the ear in the ſame head: for, as we do not ſee with the ear, nor hear with the eye; ſo, neither are we juſtified by that act of faith, that receives Chriſt, as a Lord, for ſanctification; but by that act of faith that receives him, as a Jeſus, for juſtification: we are not juſtified by that act of faith that receives Chriſt, as a King; but by that act of faith that receives Chriſt, as a Prieſt *. However, when we ſpeak of ſalvation in general, which reſpects both juſtification, ſanctification, and all; the object of it is a whole Chriſt, both as a Jeſus and a Lord; to be redeemed by him as a Jeſus, and governed by him as a Lord. It is not true faith that blows hot and cold out of the ſame mouth; that cries, HOSANNA *to the Son of David;* and yet ſays, *We will not have this man to reign over us.*

4. Hence ſee what is the *root* of *right religion*, and where it begins; and what is the root of true obedience, and the principle of it: It is rooted in union to Chriſt by the faith of God's operation; for, there is no walking in him, till once there be a receiving of him. Men may have a moral walk, a fair outward life, a good complication of many excellent beautiful virtues, and the matter and metal of them may be very good; but, like coin that does not paſs, they want the king's ſuperſcription upon them; having nothing of Chriſt in them. Yea, theſe moral virtues that ſome boaſt of are, many times, the greateſt obſtructions againſt Chriſt, that can be; while the man is puft up with his ſelf-fitneſs, and ſelf-righteouſneſs. A bottle ſtopped with gold receives not ſo much, as an empty ſhell will do: even ſo, ſome may be filled and ſtopped with golden virtues; and hence they receive not ſo much as an empty ſoul, deſtitute of all theſe, will do. But here perhaps you will ſay, *Is there any need that a change be wrought upon a virtuous man, one that has lived a virtuous life all his days?* Yea, ſurely there is; for, there is as great a difference between a life of *moral virtue*, and a life of *true grace*,

* See this important point of doctrine more copiouſly handled above, at the cloſe of the firſt general head, page 42,—48.

as

as there is between the *light of the ſtars*, and the *light of the day:* and, when grace changes ſuch a man, it is a change from ſtar-light to day-light: let him have never ſo many virtues, all theſe ſtars will not make a day. It is true, religion is under a great eclipſe in our day: and, as a bright ſtar will ſhine and make a figure in the eclipſe of the ſun; ſo will moral honeſty, when true Chriſtianity is under ſuch an eclipſe; but yet, let me tell you that this is not a goſpel ſtate: The true inviſible church is a *woman clothed with the ſun*, the Sun of righteouſneſs. There muſt be an implanting into Chriſt, a receiving of him, before there can be any true goſpel-walk. Religion muſt begin at receiving; and the walking that goes before receiving, is but morality at beſt; and whatever uſe it may be of to others, it is not what will be for your comfort or ſalvation.

5. Hence ſee, that the *doctrine of the goſpel* doth not give any room for *licentious walking*. They reproach the goſpel, who ſlander it as a doctrine of carnal liberty and licentiouſneſs: for, it calls to *receive Chriſt*, and then to *walk in him*. GOSPEL-LIBERTY, is not a *liberty to ſin*, but a *liberty and freedom from ſin*. True believers are practical Chriſtians: as by the ſame hand we receive a thing, we alſo work; ſo faith is the receiving hand, that receives Chriſt in the promiſe; and it is a working hand, that *works by love* in the commandment: and *love makes his commandments not grievous*. Why? becauſe faith's receiving Chriſt and the promiſe, is firſt: for, in the law, the obedience to the command is firſt, and this engages the promiſe; *Do this, and live:* but, in the goſpel, Chriſt and the promiſe is firſt received, and this brings in goſpel-obedience to the law, and that in all duties, both of humility towards God; and righteouſneſs, towards man. In *humility towards God;* or, *walking humbly with him*. What a ſcandal is it, to hear it ſaid, There goes a proud profeſſor; there goes a drunken profeſſor of religion, or the like? But a humble walk before God, adorns religion; and ſelf-denial is the glory of all our duties. The doctrine of the goſpel is a doctrine *according to godlineſs;* it gives no to'eration to ſin, or impiety toward God.——In righteouſneſs towards

wards man, doth this goſpel-obedience alſo vent itſelf: duties of religion, without righteouſneſs towards man, are hateful to God; *I hate your ſacrifices*, ſaith the Lord; *they are full of blood.* True religion is practical; it doth not ly in profeſſion, but goſpel-practice; not in talking of Chriſt, but walking in Chriſt. Many, as I ſaid before, are like the lark that ſings with the higheſt, but builds with the loweſt; they ſing with the higheſt, as high as angels, in their profeſſion, but they build with the loweſt, as long as devils in their practice: in their profeſſion they ſing and mount towards heaven; but in their practice they build upon the earth, and their affections are low, earthly, and ſenſual: they build their neſt in the earth.—Goſpel-liberty doth not ly in ſome *faint reſolutions;* but *real performances*, through the grace of Chriſt. Many, under convictions, will flee to their good purpoſes and reſolutions; like a mariner in a ſtorm at ſea, who, for the time, will do any thing; but when the danger is blown over, he is juſt where he was. A man that hath the falling ſickneſs, in his lucid intervals may reſolve to fall no more; but it is to little purpoſe, without ſome application to the diſeaſe, that lies within: ſo it is with reſolutions, upon convictions of conſcience, without application to Chriſt, for mortifying grace, to ſubdue their corruptions; and purifying grace, to waſh away their pollutions.—Goſpel-liberty doth not ly in *legal conviction;* for, without union to Chriſt, by faith, there is no true ſanctity, or goſpel-walking, whatever way a man may be bruiſed, in the mortar of legal conviction and humiliation, and broken with the hammer of the law. Cut a bee in pieces, yet ſhe puts forth her ſting; ſo here, ſtill the ſting of enmity remains. Let iron be broken into pieces, yet ſtill it remains hard; ſo, a heart may be broken in pieces, and yet remain hard and unhumbled. But true humility is, when the ſoul is melted, ſo as to run into this goſpel-mould; ſo as to receive Chriſt, and walk in him.

6. Hence ſee, that *true religion* is a *qualified motion;* for it is a WALK. It is a *progreſſive* motion, a moving forward; a *preſſing towards the mark;* a *going from*

ſtrength to ſtrength; from *glory to glory;* from *faith to faith:* We are like the boat in the ſtream, if it goes not forward by the oar, it will go backward with the tide; it cannot ſtand ſtill. Many, as I noticed before, are like a wheel, they go round, yet ſtill keep the ſame place; they go the external round of duties, but have no union to Chriſt, make no progreſs in the way of holineſs. But this walk is progreſſive; the man *grows in grace, and in the knowledge of Chriſt.*—It is a *permanent* motion: it is a motion, and yet a ſtedfaſtneſs, as I ſaid before; for, the man *ſtands faſt in the faith,* and yet walks faſt in obedience: he walks in Chriſt, *rooted and eſtabliſhed in him,* as ye have been taught. The apoſtle guards the Galatians from declining from the *ſimplicity of the goſpel,* upon this argument, Gal. i. 8. There is not another Jeſus, than he whom we have preached; there is not another Spirit, than he whom ye have received; there is not another goſpel, than that which we have publiſhed: if there were another, then ye might receive it; but becauſe there is not another, therefore keep by this Jeſus. There is but one Chriſt, and truth cannot be but one; if there were more truths than one, or more goſpels than one, the apoſtle could not have ſaid there, *If we, or an angel from heaven, preach another goſpel, let him be accurſed.* Whatever manifold articles of truth there be, yet truth itſelf is but one; and Chriſt the centre of truth is but one: if there were any more truths or goſpels but one, why would the apoſtle curſe the angels, that ſhall preach another? for that which they preach may be truth too: no, ſays he, ſpeaking of juſtification by Chriſt, and not by the works of the law, *If any man, or angel from heaven, preach another doctrine, let him be accurſed:* this doctrine we are to hold faſt. It is a permanent walk.—And again, it is a *perpetual* motion; a perſevering thing; a conſtant motion: to walk is not to make a ſtep or two, but it imports conſtancy; *The righteous holdeth on his way.* It is true, his ſin may make him go halting; and this is what makes a ſaint continually jealous, that he knows nothing of walking in Chriſt; becauſe he thinks, it is not a conſtant motion that he makes; but is many

times

times and ways interrupted. But I would ſay, for the encouragement of the weak believer, that ſin may be felt, and yet the walk in Chriſt may be conſtant; a man may be lame, and halt in his walking, and yet go on: Jacob *wreſtled with God*, and yet *went away halting;* Paul had a *thorn in the fleſh*, that made him halt; however, he ſaw the uſe of that thorn, like a corroſive to eat away the proud fleſh growing: *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, there was given me a thorn in the fleſh.* Hence, ſays one of the fathers, "Proud hearts have "need of ſins, as proud ſores of eating plaiſters:" in this caſe it is better to feel a corruption, than to be quit of it. A child of God will ſometimes ſee his grace, by looking to his ſin: To apply to this a ſimile that I uſed for repreſenting another thing; A man may look for the ſun's riſing in the eaſt, but he that looks for it toward the weſt, on the top of a high tower or ſteeple, may ſee it firſt: Even ſo, a man may ſee and know his grace ſooner many times, by looking to his ſins, than to his graces, though they be contrary one to another: grace is more apt to ſee ſin than to ſee itſelf; for, the eye that ſees other things, doth not ſee itſelf: ſo, grace may not ſee itſelf, but it ſees ſin and corruption; and thus humbles, and ſo carries the man forward.—— Finally, it is a *regular* motion; it is a walking by rule; a *walking in Chriſt, according as we have received him:* of which I ſpoke at large, on the doctrinal part.

7. Hence ſee what is the *way to heaven:* Chriſt is the way, and holineſs is the walk in it; and ſo, holineſs is as neceſſary to heaven, as a man's walking in a way, is neceſſary to come to his journey's end: hence, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God;* for, it is juſt a walking in the way to heaven: and the excellency of holineſs lies in this, that it is a *walking in Chriſt by faith.* Chriſt is the only way: he that thinks to reach to heaven out of this way, ſhall wander like a blind man, and never come there. The text ſhews, how faith and manners all centre in Chriſt. In our RECEIVING Chriſt, is the *act* of faith; in our WALKING in him, is the *life* of faith: He is the all of our faith and obedience. In our *receiving*, he is the *object* to be received; in our *walking*, he

is the *way* we are to walk in. Many pretend to be Chriſtians; but, being ſtrangers to Chriſt, they are monſters: for, to be a Chriſtian, without Chriſt, is like a body without a head.

8. Hence ſee, that *true faith* is never alone, but ſtill joined with *goſpel-obedience: As ye have received, ſo walk.* He that would disjoin faith from obedience, endeavours to walk with one foot, which is impoſſible. Faith and works, faith and holineſs, are the two feet by which a man doth walk in Chriſt: and when the Spirit of Chriſt doth promote the one, he doth promote the other alſo. If a man ſhould eſſay to go upon one foot, he could not walk, but only hop, which would be impoſſible for him to continue long in: neither can obedience be without faith, nor faith without obedience; but according to the meaſure of the faith, ſuch will be the meaſure of the goſpel-walk. As the fuller a veſſel is, the faſter will it run over at the top; ſo, the fuller views a man gets of Chriſt, by faith, the faſter will he run in the way of evangelical obedience. When Jacob had ſeen the ſweet viſion in Bethel, he *lift up his feet*, Gen. xxix. 1.; it put mettle into him: So here, when the poor ſoul hath once received Chriſt, and got the faith of his own operation, he is made chearfully to run the way of his commandments. Therefore,

9. Hence ſee, that the *believer hath always much ado with Chriſt;* having received Chriſt, he is ſtill to make uſe of him, by walking in him: habitual grace will not do his buſineſs, without actual grace. The believer is like the ſhip; it is not enough that he hath the ſails of grace implanted, but he muſt have the wind of the Spirit filling his ſails, otherwiſe he cannot make way towards the heavenly port. The believer is like a branch, that hath nothing of its own, but what it receives from the root, even as itſelf doth ſo ſpring from the root: he is like the moon which, as appeareth from the eclipſe, hath no light of itſelf, but increaſeth, and cometh to full, as it receiveth from the ſun. Let none think, that believers have no further uſe for Chriſt, after their firſt believing and receiving of him; nay, as Chriſt is *the author*,

author, ſo he is *the finiſher of faith*: Therefore, *As ye have received him, ſo walk ye in him.*

10. Hence we may ſee, what is the *beſt fortification againſt all ungodlineſs*, and *antidote againſt apoſtacy*. This inference I deduce from the text, compared with the whole context; for it comes in with an antidote againſt defection: for the apoſtle tells, there were ſome that went about, to *burden them with vain philoſophy, human propoſitions*, and *ſuperſtitious ceremonies*, ver. 8, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23. You ſee then, I would not go off from the ſcope of my text, to ſpeak upon this ſubject; for, how doth the apoſtle fortify them againſt theſe evils? It is even by this; *As ye have received Chriſt, ſo walk ye in him*: So that receiving him, and walking in him, is the only way to be kept from defection. Let a man receive Chriſt, and he will reject theſe things; let a man walk in Chriſt, and he will go out of the way of theſe dangerous rocks; if a man receive Chriſt, and walk in him, he will abandon and ſlight all the traſh of hell and Rome. He that hath enough ado to get food for his family, he will not beſtir himſelf, to take in chaff and traſh; but, if a baker come with an armful of bread, he will take in ſomewhat from him: ſo it is here, they that ſee a need of Chriſt, and receiving of him into their houſe, their heart, as the *bread of life*, they will not be careful to take in empty chaff, and ſuperſtitious traſh. They that take in Chriſt, the body, the ſubſtance, will not regard the ſhadow and ceremony, ver. 17. *And why are ye ſubject to ordinances*, or *burdened therewith?* ſaith the apoſtle, ver. 20. Men will not willingly ſuffer under impoſitions in their free-holds in the world; and far leſs ſhould they ſuffer the world to impoſe burdens upon their ſouls; ſuch as the burdenſome worſhip of antichriſtian, prelatic, abjured ceremonies. You heard the laſt Lord's day, of the evil of ſuch ſuperſtitious ceremonial worſhip, as it is a breach of Scotland's Covenants, and a profanation of God's name, and an incuring the judgment threatened in the third command: nay, as my reverend Brother * told you the danger of it, ſo I would tell you the antidote againſt it; and it is

* The Rev. Mr. JAMES WARDLAW, our Author's Colleague.

juſt

juſt in my text, to *receive Chriſt*, and *to walk in him.* As Chriſt and Antichriſt are oppoſites; ſo, if you receive Chriſt, you cannot but reject the traſh of Antichriſt. To walk in Chriſt, and to walk in the road of ſuperſtition, is irreconcilable: let Chriſt in, and Antichriſt will go out; let faith take place, and ſuperſtitious fancies will evaniſh.

In a word, O ſee that your faith be a *Chriſt-accepting faith*, ſo as to *receive him;* and a *Chriſt improving faith*, ſo as to *walk in him:* If your faith be not of this kind, it is not a ſaving, but a damning faith. Many have a faith that keeps them from faith; a believing that holds them faſt *in unbelief.* All the terrors of the law draws no blood, all the invitations of the goſpel moves you not; why? becauſe you lie under the canopy and ſhelter of this faith and believing, which defeats the operation both of law and goſpel, till God open your eyes to ſee through it. O ſeek, that the Lord may bring you to a faith, that receives Chriſt indeed, and ſo walks in him! The life of believers, after converſion, is an active life: none of them can ſay, Now I have no more ado, having received Chriſt; I may walk at random, and live as I liſt; no, by no means: after Iſrael were come through the Red-ſea, they had a wilderneſs to walk through; and ſo it is with every believer, while here in this world: but though he hath a journey to go, yet he hath the greateſt encouragement to walk forward; for he is in Chriſt, in whom he hath all fulneſs; and therefore let duties be never ſo difficult, and his emptineſs and inſufficiency for them never ſo great, yet no ground of diſcouragement, while he is in Chriſt, and complete in him; and called to walk in him in the whole courſe of his progreſs; yea, to *walk in him as he hath received him.* And if believers were walking in Chriſt, ſo as to keep up the ſame frame of heart in their walk, that they had in their cloſing with Chriſt, it would be the ſweeteſt and pleaſanteſt life imaginable: O what a holy, humble, ſenſible frame of ſpirit, took place when you were receiving Chriſt! how precious! how ſweet! how lovely was Chriſt every way to you then! What ſtrong deſires after him, and ardent love to him, and joyful

joyful delight in him, took place, in the day when you joined hands with him! And now, what a ſweet life would you have, if this frame of ſoul was maintained, through grace, in your walk and converſation? Why, this is what you are here called to; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

Secondly, The *ſecond uſe* is for *reproof* and *refutation* of errors, both doctrinal and practical. I begin with the former of theſe, namely,

1ſt, DOCTRINAL *errors*, which this doctrine doth refute and reprove. And,

1. It refutes the error of theſe, that take *fiducial application* out of the *nature of juſtifying faith*, while our text makes faith to be a *receiving of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* It is not only an *aſſenting to the truth of the goſpel*, but a "receiving and reſting upon Chriſt, and his "righteouſneſs, therein held forth, for pardon of ſin, "and for accepting and accounting of a man's own "perſon righteous, in the ſight of God for ſalvation," as our Larger Catechiſm deſcribes *juſtifying faith;* and theſe divines confirm their deſcription, from Acts xv. 11. *We believe that, through the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved.* So that, a *man's believing that he ſhall be ſaved, through the grace of Chriſt, and receiving and reſting on him, for this end*, is made the very eſſence of juſtifying faith, by the pureſt ſtandards of this church, in a conformity to the word of God: ſo much aſſurance and appropriating perſuaſion belongs to the nature of faith, according to the doctrine of all our Reformers, that take away unbelief from faith, and not a ſingle doubt will remain behind. Whatever doubts may be in the believer, there is no doubt in his faith: it is his unbelief that creates his doubts, and not his faith. The general doubtſome faith of the Papiſts, is not faith, but unbelief: and therefore no wonder that our forefathers abjured it, in our National Covenant. It is not a woman's believing a man to be rich and honourable, but her actual conſent to take him for her huſband, that makes marriage; ſo, it is not peoples believing Chriſt to be a great and glorious Saviour, but actual reception of him for theirs, that makes a ſpiritual marriage and u-

mion

nion to Chriſt: the receiving of Chriſt hath as cloſe and particular an appropriation of him to ourſelves in it, as a man's receiving of the meat and drink, whereby his body is nouriſhed; and therefore it is called an *eating and drinking of the fleſh and blood of the Son of God;* John vi. 53,—57. *Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoſo eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day*, &c. What is more ours than the meat we eat? Yet know, the beſt meat and drink doth no good, except you make it your own.

2. This doctrine refutes the error of theſe, who confound the *covenant of works* and the *covenant of grace;* the *law* and the *goſpel; juſtification* and *ſanctification.* The goſpel-order of things deſcribed in our text, while it makes juſtifying faith, in receiving Chriſt, to go before ſanctification, or walking in him, doth refute the legal mixture that many make in our day, while they put DOING in the ſame room it had in the covenant of works; for the legal order was, *Do, and live;* firſt the duty, and then the promiſe; and ſo, the promiſe was made to doing and walking uprightly: but the goſpel-order is, firſt the promiſe, and then duty; firſt Chriſt is received, and the promiſe of life in him, and then the duty of walking in him follows; the ſoul being ſweetly encouraged, by the promiſe, to the duty. The inverting of this order is *legal doctrine* with a witneſs. For men to make a promiſe of life to any duty or work of ours, tho' wrought by grace, is to turn the goſpel-covenant to a covenant of works; where the promiſe of life was made to man, upon his doing, by the grace and ſtrength he had received from God in his firſt creation: It is a new mould of a covenant of works, to make the promiſe of life to our duty and work, wrought by the grace of God, in the new creation: nay, the promiſe is not made to our working now, but to Chriſt, and in him to us; and this promiſe of life being made, and apprehended and received in Chriſt, then, and not till then, can a man evangelically work and walk in Chriſt, as he hath received him.

With the ſame breath, it refutes the *inverting of the goſpel-order of juſtification and ſanctification;* for, where-

as

as our text makes juſtification by faith, in receiving Chriſt, to go before ſanctification, or walking in him. Some now-a-days will tell us of *goſpel-repentance*, which is a ſpecial part of ſanctification, going before faith and juſtification; yea, neceſſary in order to it. The repeating of our text is refutation enough to ſuch doctrine: For, it plainly informs us, that juſtifying faith, receiving Chriſt Jeſus, is requiſite firſt, in order to ſanctificaon, or walking in him; and ſo to actual holineſs: for, habitual grace is infuſed by the Spirit, in regeneration, at the ſame time that the Spirit enables the ſoul to receive Chriſt; but actual holineſs cannot take place, till after this reception; and to this agrees the antient ſaying of ſome of the fathers, *Fides fæta juſtificat ante partum*; i. e. "Faith, however fruitful and big with child of good "works, yet, it juſtifieth before it bring forth any." All the *promiſes are Yea and Amen in Chriſt*, and made to him. It is true, *godlineſs* is ſaid to have *the promiſes of this life and that which is to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8.; but it is not to godlineſs of itſelf, but godlineſs in Chriſt. *All that live godly*, do it *in Chriſt*, 2 Tim. iii. 12.: no godly walking but in Chriſt; and therefore no promiſe to a godly walk, but in Chriſt. To make a promiſe belong to our doing then, or to make our works have a *federal cauſality*, or *conditionallity*, in obtaining life, is erroneous legal doctrine.

3. This doctrine refutes the error of thoſe, who bring the BELIEVER *under an obligation to obey the law, as in the hand of God Creator, out of Chriſt:* Whereas, here he is laid under obligation only to *walk in Chriſt;* that is, to obey the law in Chriſt: not to have any thing to do with an abſolute God, but a God in Chriſt; *As ye have received Chriſt, ſo walk ye in him.* The believer hath nothing to do with a God out of Chriſt; the authority and majeſty of *God is in Chriſt, in whom all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells.* And by the authority of God the Father, we are obliged to take the law, only out of the hand of Chriſt, who, in regard of eſſence, is one with the Father, and who, as Mediator, God-man, is not diveſted of his eſſential glory: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him: My name*

is in him, ſaith the Father; my authority, ſupremacy, ſovereignty, and all: and we diſhonour the Father, if we put not this honour upon the Son, to receive the law from his mouth. It is ſo far from derogating from the honour of the Father, that we cannot honour him any other way, than in Chriſt: for there is no coming to the Father but by him; and no right walking but in him.

4. This doctrine refutes the error of thoſe, who would bring the BELIEVER, in any reſpect, *under the yoke of the law, as a covenant of works;* while, "being in "Chriſt, he is wholly and a'together delivered from it; "ſo as his perſon is not under it, either as to its com- "manding or condemning power, ſo as it can neither "juſtify nor condemn him," as our Confeſſion and Standards aſſert. It can neither juſtify him for his obedience, nor condemn him for his diſobedience: Why? he is juſtified by faith, in receiving Chriſt, before ever he can obey by walking in him; and ſo cannot be juſtified by his obedience to the law: and being juſtified, his juſtification is perfect in Chriſt, and his perfect righteouſneſs: he is freed from condemnation, and no more liable to it for his diſobedience, whatever contrary apprehenſions he may have, than thoſe that are already in heaven are liable to condemnation. It is true, he is liable to fatherly wrath and chaſtiſement, while here, but being in Chriſt, his glorious Head, and a part of Chriſt myſtical, he is no more liable to condemnation, ſo long as he remains united to Chriſt, which is to eternity. When a man receives Chriſt, he rejects the law as a covenant; when he is married to Chriſt, he is divorced from the law, Rom. vii. 4. *Ye are dead to the law, by the body of Chriſt, that ye ſhould be married to another, even to him who is raiſed from the dead, that he ſhould bring forth fruit unto God.* Where alſo you ſee the believer's freedom from the law as a covenant, ſtrengthens his obligato it as a rule; for, *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* His righteouſneſs of *merit*, for juſtification, is the end of the law as a *covenant;* his righteouſneſs of *Spirit*, for ſanctification, is the end of the law as a *rule:* and both theſe are reached by receiving Chriſt, and walking in him.

5. This

5. This doctrine refutes the error of thoſe, who make the believer's *obedience* to be influenced, by the *legal hopes of heaven*, or *ſlaviſh fears of hell.* Why, to receive Chriſt as a Jeſus, is to receive him as a Saviour, to ſave from hell, ſo as to bring the man to heaven; and to walk in him as we receive him, is to walk in him as a Saviour, and ſo to improve him for that ſalvation; both negatively, in delivering from hell, and all things that lead to it; and poſitively, in bringing him to heaven, and to all the means that lead to it: and therefore, as far as we do not improve him, for both theſe ends, we do not walk in him by faith, but depart from him by unbelief. To walk in Chriſt, as we have received him, is to obey him as a Saviour; and to obey him as a Saviour, that hath purchaſed heaven for us, and ſatisfied vindictive juſtice in our room: and yet to obey from a legal hope of heaven, as if our obedience was to obtain it; or from a ſlaviſh fear of hell, as if our obedidience could procure freedom from it: I ſay, to walk in him, and obey him as a Saviour, and yet to be influenced by ſuch a legal hope or ſlaviſh fear, is inconſiſtent; for the one is the believer's duty, the other his ſin: the believer may be guilty of it through his unbelief, but it can never be his duty. To have the faith of hell, is the believer's duty; but to be moved by the fear of hell, is his ſin, and makes his obedience ſo far ſlaviſh and ſervile, not filial: to fear hell is to fear vindictive wrath, or the wrath of a terrible Judge, which is oppoſite to the holy fear of him as a loving Father, which is always his duty. And ſurely, to walk in Chriſt, and yet to fear the wrath of God out of Chriſt, are contrary; for, to fear God in Chriſt, is to fear him as a God reconciled in Chriſt, and not as a judge dealing with us, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, which is in vindictive wrath. There may be the fear of hell, where there is not a ſpark of grace, or true faith; as we ſee in devils and reprobates; their fear of the puniſhment of ſin may take place, while their willingneſs to ſin lives: and ſo, this fear no more changes the inclination of their wills, than the whip or chain doth the nature of the fox or wolf. It is holy fear that works a godly ſorrow, and it is this godly ſor-

row that brings forth theſe ſeven fruits you read of, 2 Cor. vii. 11. And thus godly ſorrow, which is the happy mother of ſo many good children, is cauſed, like Peter's weeping, by the looks of Chriſt; the reproofs, the frowns, the offences of a gracious God thaws the heart into melting fears, and would do ſo though there was no hell; as a meek child needs no other houſe of correction than his father's looks.—Again, hope of heaven is the believer's duty, when it is looked upon as a reward of grace; for, he is to have *reſpect to the recompence of reward;* and may excite and influence him in his obedience; but the legal hope of heaven, ſo as to expect to obtain it, by our obedience and good works, is a Chriſtleſs doctrine: for, to ſay that our works doth ſave us, is to deny that Chriſt is our Saviour. How is he your Saviour, if you might ſave yourſelves by your works? Or, wherefore ſhould he die to ſave you, if any works might have ſaved you? Nay, ſays the Apoſtle, *If righteouſneſs come by the law, Chriſt is dead in vain.* If you do good works, to get the inheritance of heaven thereby, you do not walk in Chriſt; for, *eternal life is the gift of God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* And if you ſeek to attain ſalvation that way, you would receive the good, not as the gift of God, but as a debt unto you; and make yourſelf fellow with God, becauſe you will take nothing from him for nought.

6. This doctrine refutes the error of thoſe, that make *good works and holineſs* the product of *man's free-will, natural power:* or, at leaſt, of the *common and general aſſiſtance of God;* or to proceed from him only as the moral cauſe, and not by way of powerful efficiency. Surely ſuch do alſo herein err, that lay ſo much ſtreſs upon natural endeavours, and moral ſeriouſneſs, as to connect the ſame infallibly with ſaving grace: ſurely none of thoſe duely ponder, that *faith is the gift of God,* and the *work of God's almighty power,* requiring the ſame powerful efficiency, that *raiſed Chriſt from the dead;* and that true obedience and good works, is a walking in Chriſt; and that walking in Chriſt, is a walking by the ſtrength and power of the Spirit of Chriſt, who ſays, that *without me ye can do nothing.* Paul tells us, in his own

own name, and in the name of all believers, that they are *not ſufficient of themſelves, to think any thing, as of themſelves, but that their ſufficiency is of God;* and that *it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* All the working and walking that men are capable of, before they receive Chriſt, is but evil works before God; for, *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God:* and *whatſoever is not of faith is ſin.* "And "ſurely evil works never make a good man? for good "works themſelves do not make a good man: no works, "good or evil, makes a man either good or evil. As "good fruit makes not a tree good, nor is it evil fruit "that makes a tree evil; but a good tree bears good "fruit, and an evil tree evil fruit: ſo, good works "make not a good man, nor evil works an evil man; "but a good man bringeth forth good, and an evil "man bringeth forth evil works. For, as the tree is "good, ere it bringeth forth good fruit; and evil, ere "it bringeth forth evil fruit: ſo, a man is good, ere "he bring forth good fruit; and evil, ere he bring "forth evil fruit. So that our works make us neither "good nor evil *."

If a man hath not received Chriſt, he is not a good man, and cannot walk in Chriſt, or do any good work; but if a man hath received Chriſt, then, and not till then, is he a good man, and ſo is capable of walking in Chriſt, and bringing forth good works; yea, natively doth this good tree bring forth good fruit.—Thus you ſee, how this doctrine ſets itſelf in oppoſition to manifold *erroneous principles:* theſe are only a few of many that might be named, which this text and doctrine doth refute; and too many of them are either directly, or

* Theſe are the words, and part of the articles of that valliant and heroic champion for the truth, and famous martyr for the cauſe of CHRIST, the Rev. Mr. PATRICK HAMILTON, who was raiſed up by God to be a happy inſtrument of our reformation from popery, in contending zealouſly againſt the abominations of Rome, till he at laſt fell a ſacrifice to his cruel and mercileſs enemies, by chearfully yielding his body to the tormenting flames at St. Andrews, while in that fiery chariot, through the aerial region, his ſoul aſcended to the celeſtial country, to poſſeſs eternal bleſſedneſs, on the laſt day of February 1527.—The famous Mr. GEORGE WISHART, ſuffered for the ſame good cauſe, in the very ſame place, and in the ſame manner, on the firſt of March 1546.

indirectly

inderectly countenanced in our day, even by public acts*, and thoſe that ought to contend moſt zealouſly for the truths of Chriſt.

The doctrine of the goſpel is like a bridge, by which alone men can go from this valley of miſery, to the regions of bliſs and happineſs; and the principles of religion, or truths of the goſpel, are like ſo many arches which, joined and united together, doth make up this bridge: and therefore theſe errors, that doth overturn any of theſe principles, do, as it were, cut out an arch from the bridge, whereby a breach is made, and the paſſage by it unto heaven, is either cut off, if the error be fundamental; or greatly obſtructed, if it nearly concerns the fundamentals of religion. Some perhaps will think, Whether or not am I making all theſe foundamental errors, and ſo all that maintain them to be cut off from heaven; and conſequently accuſe the moſt part of the miniſters of this church, except a very few? To which I would reply, That, as I do not deſire to be like thoſe, that think all Blackamoors except themſelves; ſo I preſume, that the judgment of the generality of the church of Scotland is to be gathered from the public Standards of doctrine, in our Confeſſion, and Catechiſms, deliberately enacted by this church, and to which all profeſs adherence; and not from any particular Acts relative to doctrine, either made by an overſight, or maintained by mere human authority. And therefore, whatever may be the dangerous conſequence of public deeds of that nature; yet, I entertain charity for the moſt part of the miniſters of the church of Scotland, that the latter Acts, that ſeem to claſh with our Standards, hath nothing of their deliberate approbation. However, the leaſt truth ought to be ſacred to every one of us, who are called to *prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good;* for, the loſs of the leaſt truth, whether you reckon it fundamental or not, is of dangerous conſequence: the loſs of the leaſt divine truth, is as the loſs of a diamond out of a ring; or of a jewel out of

* Our author here probably has his eye upon the acts of Aſſembly 1720. and 1722. condemning the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*. See Vol. I. p. 238. Vol. II. p. 304, 305, 395.

the

the Mediator's crown. The goſpel is like a ladder, that hath ſo many ſteps, or rounds; every truth is like a round of the ladder; and by theſe rounds we climb up to heaven: if you break off any round, you are in danger of falling; and your climbing up is rendered either difficult, or impoſſible. The truths of the goſpel are like ſtepping-ſtones over a deep water; take away any of theſe ſtones, and you make ſuch a wide and dangerous ſtep, that you are in hazard of falling into the deep. I now proceed,

2*dly*, To the other branch of this uſe of *reproof*, namely, to mention ſome *practical errors* that this doctrine doth reprove; as,

1. Thoſe that walk in *darkneſs*; we read this of the wicked, Pſal. lxxxii. 5. *That they walk on in darkneſs*; even in the darkneſs of ignorance, error, ſin, and ſecurity. Can they walk in Chriſt who walk in darkneſs? No: *If any man ſay he hath fellowſhip with Chriſt, and yet walk in darkneſs, he is a liar*, 1 John i. 6.

2. Thoſe that walk in *vanity*, Jer. ii. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they have gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?* O the vanity of mind, the vanity of thought, word, and action! Is this to walk in Chriſt? No, no: he ſays, *Follow me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*

3. It reproves thoſe that walk in *profanity* and *lasciviouſneſs*; 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4. *For the time paſt of our life may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in laſciviouſneſs, luſts, exceſs of wine, revellings, banquettings, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you.* Do theſe walk in Chriſt, that walk in drunkenneſs, whoredom, ſwearing, Sabbath-breaking, and ſuch like abominations? Oh! it is blaſphemy to think it!

4. It reproves thoſe, that inſtead of walking in Chriſt, do walk in *lies*; Jer. xxiii. 14. *I have ſeen alſo in the prophets of Jeruſalem an horrible thing; they commit adultery, and walk in lies*, &c. They that walk in hypocriſy and

and lies, inſtead of walking in Chriſt, do rather walk in the *devil*, the *father of lies*, and who *was a liar from the beginning*. God's children are called *children that will not lie*.

5. Thoſe that walk as *ſlanderers*, Jer. ix. 4, 5. *Every brother will utterly ſupplant, every neighbour will walk with ſlanders*. O ſlandering tongue! Is that the way to walk in Chriſt? No, no. See what is the character of a godly man, that ſhall abide in God's tabernacle, and dwell in his holy hill; he is one that *ſpeaks the truth in his heart; he backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour*, Pſalm xv. 2, 3.

6. Thoſe that walk in *pride*: ſuch a walk you have deſcribed in the daughters of Jeruſalem, Iſa. iii. 16. *Becauſe the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking, and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet*. And you ſee how Nebuchadnezzar learned to preach this doctrine, after the Lord had humbled him for his pride, as low as the beaſts of the field: *Thoſe that walk in pride, he is able to abaſe*, Dan. iv. 37.

7. Thoſe that walk in *carnality*, or walk after the fleſh, and after the imagination of their own evil heart, and ſo walk contrary to God: See ſuch a walk deſcribed, Eph. ii. 2, 3. *Wherein in time paſt ye walked according to the courſe of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience. Among whom alſo we all had our converſation in times paſt, in the luſts of our fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others*. To walk in Chriſt is a ſpiritual walk; and ſurely they do not walk in Chriſt, who *walk in the fleſh*, 2 Cor. x. 3.

8. Thoſe that walk in *ſuperſtition*; even in ſuperſtitious worſhip and *ceremonial cuſtoms*, Acts xxi. 21. We read there of ſome that *walk after the cuſtoms, viz.* the Jewiſh ceremonies, that were aboliſhed: Thoſe walk not in Chriſt the ſubſtance, who *walk in the ſhadow*, Col. ii. 17.

9. Thoſe that walk in *ſelf*, or ſelf-righteouſneſs; *Going*

ing about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, not ſubmitting themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God, Rom. x. 3. Thus, ſome make works their righteouſneſs; ſome make faith their righteouſneſs; and they walk in this faith, not *in Chriſt by faith:* but it is not faith that ſaves merely, but Chriſt received by faith. As it is not the laying on the plaiſter that heals the ſore, but the plaiſter itſelf that is laid on; ſo it is not our faith, or receiving of Chriſt, but Chriſt received by faith that ſaves us. It is not our looking to the brazen Serpent myſtical, but the myſtical brazen Serpent looked unto by faith, Chriſt received by faith, that ſaves us. O but ſelf is ſubtile! But if we knew ourſelves, ſelf-knowledge would be a ſchoolmaſter of humility. One of the firſt works which the word and Spirit works in men, is to give them light to go down into the dark cellar of their hearts, and make diſcoveries: we are proud becauſe we do not know ourſelves; he that knoweth himſelf, loaths himſelf; he that knoweth his wants, prays in earneſt; he that knoweth his weakneſs, fears, and flies to the Rock; he that brings knowledge of himſelf to a ſermon, gathers out of the garden thoſe herbs, that are medicinal to him. It is true, the heart is deceitful, and who can know it? but as we need not taſte all the water of the ſea, or every drop thereof, to know that it is ſalt and brakiſh; nor taſte every apple of the tree, to know the tree: ſo, the taſting of ſome evils of our heart, may make us to know what we are; ſo as to make us flee out of ourſelves to Chriſt.

10. This doctrine, in a word, reproves all *Latitudinarians* and *Libertines*, who think they believe, and ſo that they may do what they pleaſe? having *received Chriſt*, they think there is no need of *walking in him:* they pleaſe themſelves with a ſuperficial, opinionative, inoperative faith. Know, Sirs, that men are not to judge of themſelves, either by their *faith without works*, or by their *works without faith;* but by their *faith, as it works by love.*—The legal hypocrite judges himſelf, by his *works without faith.* But, as by fair and beautiful children, we cannot judge of lawful marriage; ſo, neither by the fruit of good works, can a perſon judge of his marriage to Chriſt: where there was never a formal conſent, or

receiving of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, all the profeſſed walking in him, is but hypocriſy.—Again, the goſpel hypocrite judges himſelf, by his *faith without works;* he profeſſes to receive Chriſt, but he walks not in him. A man may have a ſound faith, and yet not a ſaving faith; he may be called an orthodox believer, but yet an heterodox practitioner, an erroneous walker; ſound in his principles, but not in his morals; and this diſcovers the naughtineſs of his faith: for, *true faith works by love.*

May the Lord bear home the *reproof* himſelf, and and give us underſtanding in all things.

SERMON XL.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The ſeventh Sermon on this text.]

THERE is but one Being that we have moſt to do with, in all the world, who yet is moſt neglected by the generality of mankind, and that is God, the Being of all beings; Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, one God. There is one of theſe perſons of this glorious Trinity, that ſtands very nearly related unto man; and yet men are generally very little acquainted with him, and that is the ſecond perſon, the Son of God, who is God-man in one perſon. God and man cannot meet together in peace, after our fall into ſin, but only in this centrical place, this glorious perſon, God-man, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: without union to him, and communion with him, we cannot meet with God in mercy. Now, the way to have union to him, is by receiving him; and the way to communion with him, is by walking in him: and ſo, the whole myſtery of true religion lies here before us; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

We

We now come to the *third* uſe of the doctrine, which is for *trial* and *examination.* There are two things that we all need to examine and try, namely, Our STATE, and our WALK; our ſpiritual being, and our ſpiritual well-being: both theſe are before us in the text. The ſtate and being of a Chriſtian lies in this, that he hath *received Chriſt:* the behaviour, and well-being of a Chriſtian lies in this, that he is one that *walks in Chriſt.* And therefore let us try in both theſe particulars. 1. Let us try our *faith*, namely, if ye have *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* and ſo come to try our ſtate and ſpiritual being. 2. Let us try our *goſpel-obedience;* namely, if we be *walking in Chriſt;* and we may thus know our well-being.

Firſt, Let us try our FAITH, whether we have *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* yea or not: and ſo, whether or not we be in a ſtate of grace. O man, woman, poor dying mortals; according as you have this faith or not, ſo will it fare with you through all eternity: if you die in unbelief, *you die in your ſins*, John viii. 24. And better die in a ditch, and die like a dog, than die in your ſins. If you die in your ſins, you will riſe in your ſins, and ſtand at the tribunal of God in your ſins: you can never receive remiſſion of the guilt of ſin, nor redemption from the power of ſin, ſo long as you have not received Chriſt; and therefore reflect ſolemnly upon this matter, man, whether you have received Chriſt or not. If all that you are worth in a world, lay in one precious ſtone, and that ſtone was to be tried by a ſkilful jeweller, whether it were true or falſe, whether it would fly or endure, under the ſmart ſtroak of his hammer; ſurely your thoughts could not be unconcerned, about the iſſue of ſuch a trial. Why, man, woman, all that you are worth in this world, and in the world to come, depends upon the truth of your faith, which now we call you to try, whether it will fly or endure the trying ſtroak of the hammer of God's word. Have you no concern in this matter? You would be loath to put to ſea, though it were but to croſs a ſhort ferry, in a rotten lecky bottom; and will you dare to venture into the ocean of eternity, in a falſe rotten faith?

O man! can you be too exact and careful about that, on which the determination of your whole eſtate depends, and that for ever?—Well then, ſay you, *How ſhall I know, If I have received Chriſt, by a ſaving faith?* I do not incline to multiply marks. There are two queſtions, I would have you to examine this great matter by, whether you have ſaving faith, or not; ſuch as hath received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, 1. Enquire how it was *created* by the Spirit. 2. How it was *acted* in your ſoul.

1*ſt*, How it was *created* by the Spirit? Many pretend to faith, but can give no account how they came by it, or where they got the hand to receive Chriſt withal: but it is Chriſt that receives and embraces the ſoul, before the ſoul can receive or embrace him. Faith is the fruit of the creating power of the Spirit of God: and hence, it is called the *fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. v. 22.; ſo it is called the *faith of the operation of God*, Col. ii. 12. And ſuch a powerful operation, as is called the effect of the *exceeding greatneſs of his mighty power, which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead*, Eph. i. 19, 20. But ſome have experienced the powerful working of the Spirit in creating faith, that yet cannot give a diſtinct account of his operation therein; and therefore I will tell you of theſe two or three things, that the Spirit doth uſually in creating this faith, whereby the ſoul receives Chriſt.

1. He prepares his way by a work of *conviction*, John xvi. 8. and legal humiliation. The Spirit firſt *convinces of ſin*, and then of *righteouſneſs:* and ſurely the child of faith is not ordinarily born without pangs; ſome have greater pains than others, but all have their meaſure of conviction of ſin, and deep concern about their loſt ſtate by nature. Now, were you ever deeply convinced, and ſtabbed to the heart, by the ſharp ſword of the law; and put to that plight, *Men and brethren, what ſhall I do?* Were you ever put to your wits-end, ſo as you knew not what to do in all the world, or what hand to turn yourſelves to? Were you at that paſs, that you would have given a thouſand worlds for light and direction, where you might find outgate and deliverance to your weary

weary ſpirit? Were you ever deeply weighted and affected, with your gilt, ſin, and danger, by the powers of the world to come; and the thoughts of your ſpiritual and eternal ſtate actuating upon your ſoul, with ſuch invincible force, that you could have no reſt, no ſatisfaction, no contentment, till you got ſome ſovereign outgate? Was you ever deeply wounded upon the account of your ſin? Was it like a ſword in your bones, and like a weight of iron, and a mountain of lead upon your ſoul? Surely, if ever you have received Chriſt, you have ſeen a need of him. When you are ſick, you will readily ſee the need of a phyſician; when poor, you will ſee the need of riches; when naked, you will ſee the need of cloathing: whatever temporal ſtraits ly upon you, you will find your need of ſuitable ſupply: Even ſo, if ever the Spirit of conviction hath come in, ſurely you have ſeen a need of Chriſt, a need of mercy and pity, and of a ſovereign antidote againſt your maladies and miſeries, which have been diſcovered to you.

2. The Spirit having convinced the ſoul of ſin, in order to make the ſoul ſee a need of Chriſt, having brought the man to conviction, doth next bring him to *deſperation;* I mean, to ſelf-diſpair: This is imported in the language of thoſe, Acts ii. 37. *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* They are at a total loſs about deliverance, and the way of eſcape. It is an emphatic word to this purpoſe, the apoſtle uſeth, Gal. iii. 23. *Before faith came, we were kept under the law, ſhut up unto the faith, which ſhould afterwards be revealed;* SHUT UP *unto the faith,* συγκεκλεισμένοι, as men BESIGED and DISTRESSED in a garriſon, in a time of ſtorm, when the enemy pours in upon them through the breaches, and overpowers them; there is but one port or gate, at which they can eſcape, and to that they all throng, as deſpairing of life, if they take any other courſe: Even ſo doth convictions beſiege men, and diſtreſs them, beat them off from all their holds and entrenchments, and ſhut them up unto Chriſt, as the only way of eſcape. The man once thought his duties would ſave him; his reformation would ſave him; that a little repentance would

would ſave him, or that a ſtricter life would do the buſineſs: but now there is no hope appears in the whole horizon of ſenſe; there is no way but one, Chriſt or condemnation for ever. Now, the man is brought to ſay; Oh! I cannot deliver myſelf out of the wretched ſtate: men and angels cannot deliver me: all my former refuges will not ſecure me: I find the bed is too ſhort, the covering is too narrow; and if I truſt to theſe Egyptian reeds, they will not only fail me, but pierce and wound me too.

3. The Spirit, in working this faith, whereby the ſoul receives Chriſt, having wrought the ſoul to this conviction, this ſelf-deſpair, doth next bring the ſoul readily to the *greateſt pinch* and *ſtraits*, and *ſolemn concern*, that ever it was under about any thing in the world, as we ſee in the experience of the jaylor, Acts xvi. 29. He came *trembling*, and aſked, why the judgment of the great day was acted by way of anticipation in his conſcience? It is with no little concern, that people do revolve theſe and the like queſtions in their minds daily; *What ſhall I eat? what ſhall I drink?* and, *how ſhall I and mine be fed and cloathed?* But ſurely, much deeper impreſſions upon the heart, when the ſoul is under the awakening influences of the Spirit of bondage, do theſe queſtions make in the man's breaſt; *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* and, *What ſhall come of me through eternity?* The man is brought to a ſolemn and awful concern about his everlaſting condition; and to be in ſad earneſt about his eternal ſtate. All frolics and frothineſs doth evaniſh, and here the man lies at God's mercy, unable to help himſelf, and unworthy that God ſhould help him; and owning that he deſerves to be thrown into the bottomleſs pit; and that it will be a wonder of grace, and a miracle of mercy, if God ſhall pity him. And then,

4. The Spirit, in working this faith, whereby the man receives Chriſt, doth come into the ſoul by a *powerful, ſaving, conquering illumination;* even as a Spirit *of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Chriſt*, Eph. i. 17. Some enlightening work, ſetting home the law, and diſcovering ſin, makes way for what I have already mentioned:

mentioned: but now, ſaving, powerful, illumination takes place, for diſcovering the glorious object of faith, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for there muſt be a *ſeeing of the Son*, ere there can be a *believing in him*, John vi. 40. As faith without works, ſo the conſequent of it is dead; as faith without light, ſo the antecedent of it is blind: faith is the hand whereby we receive Chriſt, but knowledge is the eye by which that hand is directed. Now, hath ever God opened your eyes, and given you a heartſome view of Chriſt, the *King in his beauty, as fairer than the children of men;* as *more glorious than mountains of prey;* as brighter than the firmamental ſun, in his meridian ſplendor and glory? Have you got ſuch a view of him, that, ſuppoſe God ſhould come to you with Chriſt in one balance, and ten thouſand worlds, full of all imaginable pleaſures and honours, in another balance; and ſaid to you, Which of them will you chooſe? You would have rejected all thoſe with diſdain and abhorrence, and your ſoul would have flightered after a Redeemer, ſaying, *I count all but loſs and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord?* Have you got ſuch glorious diſcoveries of the grace and love of God in Chriſt, in the goſpel, as hath drawn out your heart to the offer thereof? It is by the ſhining of the goſpel light, through the free promiſe, into the heart, that the man is turned from darkneſs to light. The higheſt natural light will leave a man ſhort of the diſcovery of ſin, in its *exceeding ſinfulneſs;* and of the riches of grace in Chriſt, for the recovery of loſt ſinners: theſe cannot be ſeen aright, till they be revealed by the divine Spirit; *Fleſh and blood revealeth them not*, Mat. xvi. 17. The heart ſtood immediately before, at an infinite diſtance from the Lord Jeſus, and was full of oppoſition againſt him: but now, a divine power being exerted, by the word of the goſpel, for drawing the ſoul off from all other objects, to pitch upon Chriſt alone for ſalvation, in the way of free grace; then it accepts of the bleſſed offer, when all arguments in the world before could not prevail with it. Hath the Spirit of God cleared up to you the goſpel offer of Chriſt, in order to your receiving of him? for, *therein is the righteouſneſs of God*

revealed

revealed from faith to faith. It is in a goſpel-glaſs, that the ſoul gains a right diſcovery of the excellency of Chriſt, and that righteouſneſs of his, without which there is no ſalvation. This firſt acquaintance with Chriſt doth make ſuch a powerful alteration, by diſcoveries above ſenſe, bringing the heart towards Chriſt beyond all other means, that it uſually hath a mark upon it, in ſo much that it is moſt evidencing, and carries its evidence along with it. Such firſt things have a mark upon them, and are of a moſt deſirable nature; the ſtate thereupon being ſo vaſtly different from what it was, how refined ſoever the nature was before.——Thus try your faith by the way how it was *created* by the Spirit.

2*dly*, How was faith *acted* in your ſouls, when Chriſt was received? or, how did it act? To be ſure, in general, faith acts under the influence of the ſame Spirit that works it; for, as he works it, ſo he draws it forth to act and exerciſe; and, under this conduct, the ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts in the following manner.

1. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, doth act *humbly;* Ezek. xvi. 63. *That thou mayeſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth, becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou had done.* O but a ſoul convinced of its unworthineſs, and deſert of hell, and that ſcarce can expect any thing but utter damnation, how doth the firſt dawnings of mercy melt and humble it! O whence is this to ſuch a worm as I! He ſtands behind Chriſt weeping and waſhing his feet with tears. When one of the firſt works of the word and Spirit is, to give the ſoul a light to go down to the dark cellar of his heart, and make diſcoveries, ſo as he is ſtanding amazed, and trembling at the ſight of himſelf: and the next work of the Spirit is, to lead him in to the lightſome chamber of the King of glory, to bring him *from darkneſs to light;* how is he melted with the ſenſe of mercy!

2. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, doth act *vehemently*, and with ardent deſire after Chriſt, and *hungering and thirſting after righteouſneſs;* and crying for faith itſelf, which yet may be hid from the man's own ſight, ſaying, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief:* he ſees his own inabi-

lity

lity to believe, and that the work of faith is wholly ſupernatural; and crys, O enable me to come to Chriſt! O give me Chriſt, or I periſh for ever! It is thy work, O reveal thy arm! O man, woman, where are the bedſides, and ſecret corners where you have beſieged heaven with ſuch a cry? ſaying, O for a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem! O for a drop of that precious blood? O for a ſmile of a God in Chriſt! *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God,* Pſal. xlii. 1.

3. The ſoul in receiving Chriſt, acts *intirely* and *undividedly:* he receives him as CHRIST JESUS the LORD. As the three offices are undivided in Chriſt, ſo are they in the believer's acceptance: O my ignorance, ſays the ſoul, makes him neceſſary and deſirable as a Prophet! O my guilt makes him neceſſary and deſirable as a Prieſt! And my ſtrong corruption makes him neceſſary and deſirable as a King! To receive Chriſt as a Jeſus, in ſubmitting to his obediential righteouſneſs, for acceptation unto life, is faith unto *juſtification*, Rom. x. 10. And to conſent to have him for our Lord, to rule over us, by his Spirit dwelling in us, is faith unto *ſanctification*, Rom. viii. 9, 10, 11. Is it thus that you receive Chriſt?

4. The ſoul in receiving Chriſt, acts *confidently;* for, in him *we have boldneſs and confidence, through the faith of him;* for it acts upon an infallible teſtimony, the divine veracity and faithfulneſs; or, *Thus ſaith the Lord,* is the firm foundation upon which faith is built: faith is a *ſetting to the ſeal that God is true.* When faith is acted, God gives the man a teſtimonial; Heb. xi. 5, 6. *Enoch had this teſtimony, that he pleaſed God: But without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* But what is yet more ſtrange, faith not only gets a teſtimonial from God, but gives a teſtimonial to him, as I formerly obſerved; John ii. 33. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal, that God is true.* It is a receiving the record of God: here is the confidence and aſſurance of faith, according to the meaſure of it; and all acts of faith without this are but as ſo many arrows ſhot at random, into the open air.

5. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *violently; The kingdom of heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* It acts *peremptorily*, ſaying, If I periſh, I periſh; at Chriſt I muſt be. It acts in a manner *wilfully; Although he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him. I will not let thee go, until thou bleſs me.* The ſoul ventures upon the free grace and faithfulneſs of God, in the greateſt diſtreſſes; and here it lies, as it were, at anchor, in ſuch ſtormy days, Heb. vi. 19.

6. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *excluſively*, excluding all other ſaviours, all other helps, all other props; receiving him and reſting upon him alone; ſaying, *I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, even of thine only*, Pſalm lxxi. 16. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith*, Phil. iii. 19. To depend partly upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and partly upon our own, is to ſet one foot upon a rock, and another in the quick ſands: Chriſt will either be to us, *all in all*, in point of righteouſneſs, or elſe nothing at all; as he did the whole work, ſo he will have the whole praiſe: If he be not *able to ſave to the uttermoſt*, why do we depend upon him at all? If he be, why do we lean upon any beſide him? If we lean partly on Chriſt, and partly on ourſelves, or our own good works, wiſhes, actions, or affections we infallibly ruin ourſelves. If a man ſet one foot upon dry land, and the other upon deep water, and lean to them both with equal weight; yea, if he give any of his weight to the water, he will ſink there: So here, if a perſon reſt partly upon the merits of Chriſt, and partly, or in any degree, upon his ſelf-righteouſneſs for ſalvation, he will inevitably periſh. Man's righteouſneſs indeed was once in himſelf; and becauſe he was endowed at firſt with a perfect rectitude of nature, and ability ſufficient to have yielded perfect obedience to the law, and thereby to have obtained eternal life, had he perſevered in his integrity: ſo there is ſtill a mighty bias in his heart, though now depraved, to ſeek righteouſneſs by the works of the law; and all his beſt actions ſavour much of this legal turn of mind. It is

with

with all Adam's poſterity as with bees, which have been accuſtomed to go to their own hive, and carry all hither; if the hive be removed to another place, they will ſtill fly to the old place, hover up and down about it, and creep about the ſides of it, and rather die there than go to a new place: ſo it is with us, God hath removed our righteouſneſs from ourſelves to Chriſt, it is not now in ourſelves but Chriſt; but, who is prevailed with to forſake ſelf, and ſelf-righteouſneſs? Corrupt nature will venture to be damned rather than do it. The proud ſelf-conceited heart will not ſtoop to live upon a ſtock of another's righteouſneſs: but now, by faith, or in the day of believing, the man is brought to this; *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength;* and acts upon Chriſt excluſively, excluding all other Saviours, all other righteouſneſs, in point of juſtification; yea, and excluding all other Lords in point of ſanctification: for, whereas unbelief ſays, *We will not ſuffer this man to reign over us*; and hypocrites ſay, We will have this man, and the world; this man, and our luſts both, to reign over us: Faith ſays, we will have none but this man, this God-man, to reign over us. A man may as lawfully join ſaints and angels, in his mediation with Chriſt, as his graces: "It is groſs idolatry, ſays "one, [*viz.* Mr. Burgeſs,] to make the works of God, "a God; and it is but a more ſubtile idolatry, to make "the works of Chriſt, a Chriſt.

7. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *regularly;* I mean, according to the goſpel-rule, and ſuitable to the goſpel-offer; *So we preached, and ſo ye believed,* 1 Cor. xv. 11. Faith anſwers the goſpel-offer, as the impreſs upon the wax doth anſwer the engraving of the ſeal: ſo Chriſt offers himſelf, and ſo faith receives him, namely, for *wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.*

8. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *methodically,* receiving firſt the PERSON and then the BENEFITS: God gives CHRIST, and then with him *all things,* Rom. viii. 32. And ſo faith receives Chriſt, and then, in and with him all things. It is true, ſalvation muſt be moſt of all in the ſinner's eye, at his firſt believing; and thus

many, in their acting faith at firſt, may be filled with much confuſion, and are not diſtinct in their actings of faith: but this is the proper order in believing, as will afterward be more and more clear to every believer, upon his repeated acts of faith, firſt to accept the perſon, and then the benefits.

9. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *freely;* he receives the *water of life freely*, Rev. xxii. 17. Iſa. lv. 1. The man comes to receive Chriſt with an empty hand, as to one that *juſtifies the ungodly;* Rom. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs. To him that worketh not,* in the law ſenſe; not to work, and not to work perfectly, is all one to the law. Now, the man is convinced that, as he cannot work perfectly, nay, cannot work at all, ſo he comes to Chriſt as one that is in himſelf ungodly, acknowledging that the righteouſneſs, by which, he can ſtand before God, is only in Chriſt, and not in himſelf, in whole or in part. The man comes emptied of all qualifications to recommend him to God; he ſees himſelf qualified for nothing, but hell and damnation; and thus comes freely, to get all good out of Chriſt's fulneſs: he is an empty-handed ſinner; but he comes to one who is a full-handed Saviour; for he hath ſuch a ſtock of grace as cannot be exhauſted: angels have a fulneſs of ſufficiency, but they have none to ſpare; but Chriſt hath a fulneſs of redundancy, that hath been flowing over to ſinners, near theſe ſix thouſand years, and yet is not leſſened: and it is he that lets out of his grace with the word you hear, or elſe you get no good of the ſermon.

10. The ſoul, in receiving Chriſt, acts *ſucceſsfully* and *fruitfully;* and by its fruit you may know it: for, true faith is a fruitful faith. It brings forth the fruit of goſpel-repentance, Zech. xii. 10. *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn.* O but the apprehenſion of grace and mercy in Chriſt, thaws and melts the heart! It brings forth the fruit of *love to Chriſt*, his ways, his people; *Faith worketh by love*, Gal. v. 6. Again, *To you that believe, he is precious.* O! *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none in all the earth*

that

that I deſire beſides thee.—It brings forth the fruit of *heart* and *life purity;* Acts xv. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith.* Morality may hide corruption, but faith purifies the heart from it; and it cleanſes the hands alſo; the man is ſanctified by that faith which is in Chriſt.—It brings forth the fruit of *zeal;* zeal for the Lord's *name*, and *honour*, and *glory:* O the man could wiſh, that all the world would come and admire him; that all the world would come and adore him, and love him! The man is made content to do and ſuffer for him, to live and die for him, ſo as he is a witneſs for Chriſt, at leaſt in the intention, and a martyr in reſolution: this takes place when faith is up.—Zeal againſt *ſin*: O the more ſweet that Chriſt is to the man, the more bitter is ſin! O that abominable thing that God hates! He now reſolves to purſue it to death: he not only confeſſes, but forſakes; not only forſakes, but hates; and not only hates, but kills and crucifies; and not only kills it, but deſires to bury his dead out of ſight; to have his ſeed buried in Chriſt's grave; to be ſaved by him and riſe with him.—Zeal for God's *houſe*, and love to the ordinances of his appointment: *O how amiable are thy tabernacles! Thy words were found of me, and I did eat them.* The word and ordinances are the very food of faith; and the deſire of the believer's ſoul is after the ſame: and here he is painful and diligent in his attendance upon the ſame. If we weigh the pains for bodily food, with the pains that men take for their ſoul, in the balance of the ſanctuary, many would diſcover their want of faith, or their faith to be lighter than vanity: how do men, even without all ſenſe of pain, undergo ſore labour and toil, for the matter of a ſhilling? How, in the time of harveſt, will they even melt themſelves in the heat, and yet are merry and pleaſant? How will they in winter ride to markets, and ſtand in the open and cold air all day long, to vent their commodities without fretting? But now compare this to the other: ſee what vain and fleſhly excuſes men will have, about the hearing of the word; as, who can endure to go to church when the weather is ſo hot, there is ſuch crouding? and what a miſery is it to ſtand all the time of the ſermon? and,

who

who can endure to ſit an hour in the cold church? truly, it is enough to make a man catch his death! Why, man, can you endure the ſummer heat and winter cold about your outward affairs, and ſtand a whole day in your ſhop, or in the market, in the coldeſt of winter? and do you excuſe yourſelves, or fret for an hour in the church? Can you be content to labour ſix days, for your bodily food; and think you it great pains to beſtow one day in following the goſpel-market for your ſouls? What does this argue in you, but that you have no faith to feed upon the word; no affection or deſire after the bread of life, for your ſpiritual maintenance and ſuſtenance? If you had a fervent zeal for the word, it would cool the heat of ſummer and warm you againſt the cold of winter; you would little regard ſuch trifles as cold and heat, wind and weather; theſe would evaniſh before this zeal, as the morning due before the ſun: theſe ſhifts and excuſes could not ſtand the zeal of God's houſe; it would eat up and conſume them. Now, try yourſelves by theſe things.

It may be ſome weak believer may be ſaying, *Some of theſe marks I know to my experience; but others are dark to me, therefore I doubt of all.* To which we reply, If indeed you have one ſaving ſolid mark, and can really cloſe with it; it may ſatisfy you, though you be in the dark in others. If a child cannot go, yet if it can ſuck; if it cannot ſuck, yet if it can cry; if it cannot cry, yet if it can breathe, it is a mark of life: ſo, there may be breathings in the ſoul, that are evidential of life and faith, when other things are hid. O try yourſelves, and look to God to ſearch and try you! it is by his judgment you ſtand or fall.

Secondly, Let us try our GOSPEL-OBEDIENCE, or our *walking in Chriſt*. Chriſt is the way to heaven, and faith is the way to Chriſt: This faith hath two offices, the one is *acceptance*, and the other is *dependance:* O! what a mercy is it that we, who are by nature out of the way, have the way to heaven ſet before us, namely, Chriſt; and the way to this way, namely, faith; and the nature and office of this faith: the firſt office of it, is acceptance, or the reception of Chriſt: the ſecond office of it,

is

is dependance on him, or walking in him: and both theſe are here before us in the text; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.* Here is a very large field, and it is not poſſible to travel through it all; for it concerns both the internal diſpoſition, and the external converſation; and to both theſe we muſt have a view, in the progreſs of this trial. This walk in Chriſt is juſt the *obedience of faith;* and when we propoſe to try this, it is all one as to try, whether or not we be living the live of faith; for, as to *receive Chriſt*, is to *come* to him by faith; ſo, to *walk in him*, is to *live* on him by faith; for, to walk in Chriſt, is to walk by faith, as we have received him; or ſuitably to the reception of him, as I ſhewed at length on the doctrinal part, and might reſume it by way of trial: but becauſe I enlarged ſo much upon it then, ſhall offer ſome particulars diſtinct, at leaſt in the enlargement from what I then propoſed and proſecuted. To be ſure thoſe do not walk in Chriſt, whom I ſpoke of in the uſe of reproof, that habitually walk in the darkneſs of ignorance and error; that walk in vanity and profanity; that walk in lies and ſlander; that walk in proud ſelf and ſuperſtition; that walk in carnal liberty, in rioting and drunkenneſs, chambering and wantonneſs; yea, theſe that never received Chriſt, are not capable of this walking in him; and therefore the root of this walk, is the reception of Chriſt, concerning which I offered ſome marks before. Now, I inſiſt the longer upon this uſe of trial, not only becauſe we may thereby try ourſelves, but alſo therein be further inſtructed, concerning the nature and excellency of this walk. There are two general heads I propoſe in this part of the uſe of trial, whether we know or not, what it is to walk in Chriſt, namely, 1. To try by the *ſcriptural qualities* of it. 2. By the *goſpel proviſion* for it.

1*ſt*, Try this Chriſtian walk, or walking in Chriſt, by the SCRIPTURAL QUALITIES of it. And,

1. It is a *mixed* walk: this we may view concerning it more generally; it is a mixed kind of a walk, interwoven with a great many viciſſitudes: as long as believers are in this valley of tears, ſometimes they walk

in

in the light of God's countenance, ſometimes they walk in darkneſs; Pſal. lxxxix. 15. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound; they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* Iſa. l. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light?* It is a changeable kind of walk, not in reſpect of the believer's ſtate, nor yet his habitual tendency towards God and heaven; but in reſpect of his inward frame and outward condition; he is like a man that, in a journey, is ſometimes going up hill, and ſometimes down; ſometimes in a valley, and ſometimes on a mountain; ſometimes meets with a piece of dirty way; ſometimes with a more plain and eaſy road. It is ſaid of the wicked, *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God:* It is true, the wicked may have their outward changes, from proſperity to adverſity; yea, and their inward changes, from an ill mood to a good mood; but as they are ſtill always the ſame thing; ſo their moſt remarkable changes differ from the changes of God's people, whoſe mixed walk, and interchangeable circumſtances, do mainly conſiſt in their feeling ſometimes the ſmiles, and ſometimes the frowns of the Lord: now he ſhines, and then he hides; now he is preſent, and than he is abſent: *I ſaid, my mountain ſtandeth ſtrong; but lo, thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled.* The changes of the hypocrite, is like that of a ſtone put into the fire; it is changed from cold to hot, but it is a hard ſtone ſtill: but that of a believer, is like gold put into the fire; it is tried and purified thereby, and purged from ſome droſs.

2. It is a *denyed* walk; to walk in Chriſt is as much as to walk, not in ourſelves; the man is denyed to himſelf, and his own underſtanding and wiſdom; to his own ſtrength and righteouſneſs. The diſcipline of Chriſt muſt *deny himſelf*, and have *no confidence in the fleſh:* hence it is called, a *walking humbly with* OUR GOD, Micah vi. 8. Auguſtine being aſked, What was the firſt grace? Anſwered, Humility: What is the ſecond? Anſwered, Humility: What is the third? Anſwered, Humility. Indeed it is the varniſh of every grace; and *God gives grace to the humble:* he loves to lay his wines in the

the loweſt cellars. The motto of a humble ſaint is, *Poor and needy; poor in ſpirit:* and here the pooreſt are the richeſt; the man is empty in himſelf, but full in Chriſt; hath nothing in himſelf, but hath all in Chriſt; and is filled with ſelf-debaſing, God-exalting, grace-admiring thoughts, ſaying with Jacob, *I am leſs than the leaſt of thy mercies*, Gen. xxii. 10.; and with Job, *I abhore myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes;* and with Aſaph, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee;* and with Heman, *I am more brutiſh than any man;* and with Iſaiah, *I am unclean;* and with Paul, *I am the chief of ſinners, and the leaſt of ſaints.* It is a humble and denied walk; the man is denied to himſelf, brought out of himſelf.

3. It is a *dependant* walk: it is a living by faith in the Son of God, and dependance on him; like the ſpouſe, *Going up from the wilderneſs, leaning on the Beloved.* As it is with a woman, ſhe firſt gives her conſent, and becomes a wife: and then, being a wife, ſhe looks upon her huſband, as the only perſon to ſupply her, protect her, comfort her, and provide for her: ſo it is with faith, it firſt eſpouſes the ſoul to Chriſt, takes him as a Lord and Huſband; and then caſts all the proviſion of the ſoul upon him, all ſupplies and helps; truſts on him for righteouſneſs, for pardon of ſin, for grace, for ſtrength, for comfort, for eternal life; and commits all to him, 2 Tim. i. 12. *I know in whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.* Though other things ſhould all fail, faith depends upon Chriſt: when the ſpider's web is ſwept down, when the cob-webs of creature-confidences are ſwept down, faith will ſee a ſure foundation to reſt upon: *Though the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herb in the ſtalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation,* Hab. iii. 17, 18. He that crutches, if he lean not on them in his walking, take away his crutches and he will walk ſtill; but take away a cripple's crutches, that goes upon them, and he

comes to the ground preſently: ſo, if we did not, like cripples, lean upon theſe outward things, or outward frames, we would not be ſo eaſy thrown down, in their removal. To walk in Chriſt is to depend upon him; it is a dependant, a believing walk; leaning upon the word of God, his bare word: and indeed, if a man of worth ſhould be aſked a pawn, and not credited upon his word, he would take it in ill part: what a ſhame is it, that we cannot credit God, without pawn and caution!

4. It is an *extenſive* walk: what is ſaid of the commandment of God, we may ſay of this walk; *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy commandments are exceeding broad.* It is a narrow and ſtrait way indeed, in regard of its difficulty to nature, and the paucity of thoſe that walk in it; but it is broad in itſelf, in reſpect of its extent. This walk of Chriſt extends to all the commandments of God; for the man that walks in Chriſt, hath a *reſpect to all God's commands.* It extends to all the duties of religion; and to all the graces of the Spirit. It extends to all the motions of the heart, and all the actions of life; to every thought, word, and deed. In all theſe, we are called to walk in Chriſt by faith. Yea, it extends to all the circumſtances of the believer's life; to all the indigencies of his life; and all the exigencies of his ſoul; for, *the juſt ſhall live by faith*, Rom. i. 17. Where is the believer on earth, but hath the ſenſible feeling ſtill of ſome diſtreſs or other, inward or outward; whether it be ſenſe of ſin, or ſenſe of guilt, or ſenſe of corruption, or ſenſe of temptation, or ſenſe of deſertion, or ſenſe of wickedneſs, or ſenſe of want, or ſenſe of affliction from God, or ſenſe of contradiction from the world? Now, in all theſe, he is to live by faith, and to walk in Chriſt, knowing there is enough in him to anſwer all. The ſoul cannot be caſt into any ſea, but Chriſt is a ſure ſhip and ſafe harbour. To walk in him, is to improve him in every caſe, and to truſt in him for relief, in every exigency. A man is ſaid to walk, not merely when he hath feet to walk with, but when he is making uſe of his feet, to carry him on his way: even ſo, a man walks in Chriſt, not merely when he hath faith,

faith, and hath received Chriſt, but when he is by faith improving Chriſt, in every time of need, for pardon, light, life, liberty, comfort, and communication: the habit and quality of faith is one thing; the uſe and exerciſe of faith is another. A man is ſaid to live by bread, not when he hath it in his cup-board, but when he takes and eats it: ſo, to live by faith, is to put faith to exerciſe; to bring the pitcher to the well and draw water. Why, ſays the man, that is walking in Chriſt, there is corruption working again; but I will away to Chriſt again to ſubdue it: Satan renews his temptations, but I will renew my addreſs to Chriſt; he will again *bruiſe Satan under my feet:* my comforts are gone, but I will go to Chriſt; he *will come again, and my joy ſhall be full.* The life of faith is a multiplied work, and a repeated work; it leads the ſoul often to look, even for the ſame kind of ſupply. To live by faith, is to keep houſe with Chriſt, and to be his daily gueſt; to rely upon him as often as we have need, and to draw ſtill from the ſame fountain.

5. This walk in Chriſt, is a *goſpel walk; Only let your converſation be, as it becometh the goſpel of Chriſt,* Phil. i. 27. It is under a goſpel-conduct; according to a goſpel-rule; from a goſpel-motive; in a goſpel-manner; to a goſpel-end; and by a goſpel-ſpirit, which were a large theme, if I could inſiſt upon it.—This goſpel-walk hath *goſpel-holineſs* in it, and ſo it is a *holy* walk; *Be ye holy as I am holy: holineſs becometh his houſe for ever; And without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord.*—It hath *goſpel-circumſpection* in it, and ſo it is called a *circumſpect* walk; *See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil.*—And a *watchful* walk, knowing that there is a deceitful heart within, a flattering world without, and a tempting devil going about us: therefore, what *Chriſt ſays to one, he ſays to all,* WATCH.—It hath a *goſpel-uprightneſs* in it; and ſo it is called an *upright* walk; *He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely: The way of the Lord is ſtreight to the upright: He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold, from them that walk uprightly.*—It hath a *goſpel-order* in it; and ſo it is called a *well-order-*

ed walk; *To him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.* And as a walk is orderly, when a man gives every duty its proper time and place, and ſuffers not one to claſh with another, or one to ſhuffle out another; ſo, goſpel-order in our walk, will make a man bring all from Chriſt, and then improve all for him: it makes a man live upon him as the ALPHA of his life, and to him as the OMEGA of it.—In a word, a goſpel-walk hath a *goſpel ſpirit* influencing it; and ſo it is a chearful walk, according to the meaſure of the Spirit; *The joy of the Lord, is the man's ſtrength:* and this joy is not inconſiſtent with goſpel-ſorrow; for it may be, and frequently is, both a joyful and a mournful walk at once; for a man never begins to mourn as a child, till he hath faith to ſee God as a Father: the gracious looks of Chriſt are the ſprings of goſpel-repentance: *And bleſſed are they that thus mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.*

6. This walk of Chriſt, it is a *heavenly* walk: the man that walks in Chriſt, hath his *converſation in heaven*, where Chriſt is, Phil. iii. 20. There is here a heavenlineſs of thought: the man in this walk comes to be heavenly-minded; at leaſt he is burdened, that he cannot get his thoughts placed on heavenly things, and beſt pleaſed with himſelf, when he gets his heart ſet in heaven. There is a heavenlineſs of ſpeech that he endeavours, when he is walking in Chriſt; a heavenlineſs of language; a heavenlineſs of affections; a heavenlineſs of trading by faith and prayer, drawing bills of exchange, as it were, upon Chriſt for whatever he ſtands in need of. How unſuitable is it for them, that have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, to have an earthly walk! like the bird they call a lapwing, that hath a crown upon his head, and yet feeds upon excrements. Hath the Lord crowned you with loving-kindneſs, and yet do you live upon the dung of this world; made you an heir to a kingdom, and yet you ly tumbling among aſhes? If God hath given you the fountain of living waters, and yet you are anxiouſly careful about the drops, that are in the broken ciſtern; ſurely you are not walking in Chriſt.

Chriſt. The ſaint that doth not live above the world, he lives beneath himſelf.

7. It is a *ſtedfaſt* walk; *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. It is progreſſive, and yet ſtedfaſt; for, as I have formerly obſerved, the very word WALKING, imports progreſs and permanency. There is a conſtant progreſs in it; *The righteous holdeth on his way, and he that hath clean hands, waxeth ſtronger and ſtronger. The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* True grace is of a growing nature. It is true, the believer may not be ſenſible of his growth, as we do not ſee ourſelves or others grow; but that we are grown, is plain; neither do we ſee how much the light increaſes, by every ſtep of the ſun's riſing higher; it is by imperceptable inſtances or degrees. When power of reſiſting temptations, and mortifying luſts, which before were too hard for us doth appear, we may ſee our growth; as we ſee our ſhadows are ſhortened, when the ſun riſes higher, but how much in a minute, we ſee not; yet it is a progreſſive walk. If the believer be not walking forward, he is not walking in Chriſt; for, when he walks in Chriſt, he is always coming ſpeed: and this walk in Chriſt, or living by faith on him, is the only ſtedfaſt and abiding life and walk. Though the mariners, when they put to ſea, may quickly loſe ſight of land, yet they never loſe ſight of heaven; how far ſoever they ſail, in whatever tempeſt, yet ſtill, if they look up, they will ſee the ſame heaven: even ſo, the man that walks in Chriſt, and lives by faith, his faith never loſes its ſight of its rock; he may loſe ſight of land, ſight of friends, ſight of relations, and enjoyments of time, and all human props; but faith acted, will never loſe ſight of God, and Chriſt, and the promiſe: though all ſenſible enjoyments fly off, yet the man, who lives by faith, is at no loſs: What can he lack, who hath him that is *all in all?*

8. It is a *familiar* walk; *So walk ye* IN *him.* O! who can walk more familiarly, one with another than this, for one to walk IN another? *walk* IN *him! Two cannot walk together, except they be agreed:* here is the ſweeteſt agreement and familiarity. There are ſeveral acts of familiarity,

miliarity; by which this intimate walk is expreſſed in ſcripture; and each of them might alſo be matter for our trial, whether we know this familiar walk.—There is *communion* between Chriſt and the believer; *Truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with the Son, through the Spirit. He ſups with them, and they with him.*—There is *communication; The ſecret of the Lord is with them;* and they impart their ſecrets to him.—There is *cohabitation;* he dwells in them by his Spirit; *I will put my Spirit within you. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be one in us:* and they dwell in him by faith.—There is *co-ambulation;* he walks with them, and they walk with him; *He walks in the midſt of the golden candleſticks:* they ſhall *walk with him all the day long.*—There is *confabulation;* he ſpeaks to them, and they to him: they converſe together: *Thou ſaidſt, Seek ye my face; my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.*—There is mutual *viſitation;* he viſits them in a way of grace, and they him in a way of duty.—There is mutual *feaſting* and *banquetting; He brought me to the banquetting-houſe, and his banner over me was love.*—There is mutual *ſalutation* and *embracement;* they *greet each other with a holy kiſs: Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth; for his love is better than wine.* And they learn to *kiſs the Son leſt he be angry.*—But I enlarge not upon theſe now: what know you of theſe things, when thus you ſee what ſort of a walk it is, this walking in Chriſt?——Try yourſelves, by ſearching into the ſcriptural qualities of it.

2*dly*, Try this walk by the GOSPEL-PROVISION for it. All that know this walk, and truly walk in Chriſt, they are provided for the journey: God ſends none a warefare on their own charges; nor doth call any to walk in him, without providing them for the way. And there are theſe eight things that travellers need for their journey, and all theſe things ſpiritual travellers have in Chriſt; yea, and communicate from him, according to the exigencies of their journey.

1. The traveller muſt have a *guide* to direct him: even ſo, if ye walk in Chriſt, ye have a guide; Chriſt himſelf is the guide: *This God is our God for ever and ever, and will be our guide even unto death.*—He is a ſkilful

ful guide, that knows every ſtep of the way.—A faithful guide, that doth not miſlead his people.—A tender guide, that helps the weak traveller.—And a continual guide, that never leaves them nor forſakes them.—Now, what know you of his guiding you by his word and Spirit? Do you ever hear the voice behind you, ſaying, *This is the way walk ye in it*, when you go to the right-hand, or to the left? And have you been made to reſign yourſelves to his conduct?

2. The traveller muſt have *light*, for it is hard to walk in the dark; and *ſight*, that his eye may be upon the road: for though a traveller have light, yet if he ſhut his eyes, or ſuffer them to gaud, or to wander, without noticing the way, he is ready to ſtumble, or turn aſide; ſo the ſpiritual traveller, that walks in Chriſt, he gets light and ſight: and indeed Chriſt himſelf is his light; for, *He is the light of the world:* and his Spirit is given to the believer, as a *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation;* and it is he that gives him ſight as well as light, and fixes his eye: hence prays the Pſalmiſt, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken me in thy way*, Pſal. cxix. 37. Right walking is influenced by the light of the knowledge of Chriſt: the more we know of Chriſt, the more will we walk in him; yea, and the more we walk in him, the more will we know him; *He that doth his will, ſhall know his doctrine:* they influence one another. Even as the body warms the cloaths, and then the cloaths warm the body: ſo, the knowledge of Chriſt leads to goſpel-practice; and goſpel-practice leads to more knowledge.

3. The traveller muſt have a *cordial*, that he faint not by the way: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt have a cordial provided; and indeed Chriſt, who is the way, is alſo the cordial; for, he is the *conſolation of Iſrael:* and he affords them ſometimes ſtrong conſolation, ſo as the *joy of the Lord is their ſtrength. Wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs*, though the world reproach it as a melancholy way.—Now, what know you of the goſpel cordial, or of the intimations of divine love, filling your hearts, at ſometimes, with *joy unſpeakable*, and *peace that paſſeth all* natural *underſtanding?* This is what he affords,

affords, now and then, to thoſe that walk in him: he hath provided public inns for their refreſhment and entertainment; and theſe are the public ordinances of his grace; the banquetting-houſes, where he ſatiates and ſolaces his people with himſelf, on the *feaſt of fat things*, even the *true bread that cometh down from heaven*, and diſplays his *banner of love over them*.

4. The traveller muſt have a *purſe* and *money* to bear his expences: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt, they get *unſearchable riches* in him; *Out of his fulneſs they receive, and grace for grace*: they get what they need, though not always what they would; but he is a wiſe diſpenſer, and they have enough in him: yea, are *complete in him*; in whom is fulneſs of merit for their juſtification, and fulneſs of Spirit for their ſanctification: *Money that anſwers all things*; yea, *durable riches and righteouſneſs*; riches that will not rot in the grave, nor take the wings of the morning and fly away, as temporal enjoyments do: here is enough to pay all his charges, ſatisfy all his creditors, and anſwer all the law-pleas of the devil, of conſcience, yea, of juſtice, and the law itſelf.—Know you what it is, man, to be ſupplied out of this ſtock?

5. The traveller muſt have *armour* for his journey: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt, they get weapons to defend them from robbers and wild beaſts, that are ready to bereave them of their life, and of their goods. See the Chriſtian's complete armour, Eph. vi. 11,—17. You have the ſeveral pieces of armour there mentioned; and Chriſt himſelf is the great magazine of his military proviſion: the traveller walks in Chriſt, and in him hath all theſe pieces of armour; therefore is called, to be *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*.—Are you acquaint with this way of travelling, and walkieg in arms, depending on the power of a Mediator to fight all your battles againſt ſin and Satan?

6. A traveller muſt have a *girdle* for his loins, to keep up his looſe garments, and to keep his loins firm, that he do not weary with the length of his journey: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt, need to *gird up the loins of their mind*, as the apoſtle expreſſes it; and to *have their loins girt about with truth*, Eph. vi. 14. Now,

as

as *Chriſt is the way*, ſo he is *the truth*, and can give *truth in the inward part*, and therefore will provide them of a girdle. His *truth ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler*, Pſal. xci. 4. Spiritual travellers are therefore taught the truth, as it is in Jeſus: both the truth, in reſpect of goſpel-principles; and the truth of God in his promiſe.

7. The traveller muſt have *ſhoes* for his feet: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt, they muſt have their *feet ſhod with the preparation of the goſpel of peace;* that is, with a heart prepared to adhere to the goſpel, and abide by it: now, this *preparation of the heart is from the Lord.* Do you find your heart prepared, fortified, and ſtrengthened by his grace, notwithſtanding of difficulties that are in the way of adhering to his truth, his goſpel, his cauſe, and his intereſt in the world?

8. The traveller muſt have a *ſtaff* in his hand, to help him forward, and to lean upon: even ſo, they that walk in Chriſt, have a ſtaff put in their hand; *Thy rod and thy ſtaff, they comfort me*, Pſal. xxiii. 4. And what is the ſtaff they lean upon? CHRIST himſelf is the main ſtaff; *She goeth up from the wilderneſs, leaning upon her Beloved.* More particularly,

(1.) The ſtaff of his *All-ſufficiency;* ſaith God to Abraham, *I am God all-ſufficient, walk before me;* I have enough in myſelf, and enough for every creature: as the ſun hath light enough for a whole world; and a fountain of water enough for a whole country. *Walk before me:* if you want light, you will look to the ſun; if you want water, you will go to the ſpring; and ſo, if you want any good, will you not look up to me, who am goodneſs itſelf, and infinitely able to ſuccour; All-ſufficiency itſelf, and infinitely able to ſupply? There is a ſtrong ſtaff.

(2.) The ſtaff of his *promiſe;* as when God ſays, *I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward: Fear not, for I am with the; I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my righteouſneſs.* Not only have I all good, all-ſufficiency, but there is a promiſe, might he ſay, that all the good I can do, I will do it for thee: there is no particular want of the believer, but hath a particular promiſe. If you knew a man to be ſufficient, and to

have an eſtate worth ten thouſand pounds, and all free, you would ſoon truſt him for an hundred pound: but if he ſhould tell you particularly, and ſay, Friend, I have a great eſtate, and I pray thee, if thou haſt need of any thing, at any time, repair to me, I give thee my word, and if that be not enough, my bond and ſeal, that I will help thee; it were enough, he needed ſay no more. Yet, thus ſaith the Lord to the man that hath received Chriſt; Not only am I an all-ſufficient God, but I promiſe that I will give thee *grace and glory, and with-hold no good thing from thee:* as true as I am God, *I will not leave thee, nor forſake thee.* Is not this an excellent ſtaff to lean upon?

(3.) The ſtaff of his *power:* Whatever God promiſeth, he is able to make good. Many a man is undone by ſuretyſhip; he ſuffers himſelf to be bound beyond his ability: but it is not ſo with God. If a ſubject promiſe to releaſe and pardon a malefactor, it is nothing; he is not truſted, becauſe he hath not power of life or death. If a poor man promiſe to diſcharge a great debt, nobody will credit his promiſe; becauſe his ability is not anſwerable to his undertakings: But behold here, Chriſt hath ability to make good all his promiſes: he hath promiſed great things; to pardon great ſins, to conquer great temptations, to ſubdue great corruptions, to convey great conſolations. Well, but he is a great God; is any thing to hard for him? Do your particular wants ſtill increaſe and renew themſelves? Well, as veſſels which we fill to-day, need a new filling to-morrow; the ſtomach which we ſeem to ſatisfy juſt now, within a few hours is empty and craving again: ſo here, the ſoul that hath once *taſted and ſeen that God is good*, ſees that this taſte is not ſufficient to ſupport him, and that created fulneſs will ſoon be diminiſhed, if it is not daily ſupplied, and therefore ſtill wants more, ſaying, *Evermore give us this bread.* But, here lies the comfort, that though the veſſel be dry, the fountain is not; though the veſſel be empty, the fountain is full: and his power to help is a creating power; ſuch as can command things into being. O what a wonderful ſtaff is this!

this! Do you know what it is to walk with this ſtaff in your hand?

(4.) The ſtaff of his *fidelity:* behold, the promiſes are ſealed with truth; it is *God who cannot lie who hath promiſed: Faithful is he who hath promiſed, who alſo will do it.* He takes his own time, but he will be true to his word; *Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will perform the good thing, which I have promiſed to the houſe of Iſreal, and to the houſe of Judah.*

(5.) In a word, *Chriſt himſelf*, and his *everlaſting righteouſneſs*, his *meritorious obedience* to the death, with which God is well-pleaſed, and his *valuable interceſſion*, whom God heareth always, is the ſtaff which the believer leans upon: he that is the way they walk in, is the ſtaff they walk with, and lean upon; for, *in him are all the promiſes Yea and Amen;* and one word of promiſe from a God in Chriſt, is enough to faith. If a mariner can get to the top of the maſt, and deſcry but a point of land, then he is glad, and all is well: thus the believer by faith climbs to the top-maſt, and ſees the *promiſe afar off*, Heb. xi. 13.; and rejoices in Chriſt, in whom it ſtands faſt. Every believer is ordinarily brought to ſuch circumſtances, that, if he do not live by faith, he cannot live at all: he is brought to Jehoſaphat's plight; *We know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.* It is with them, many times, as with a ſhip laden; on a ſudden it is broken to pieces, and now of neceſſity they muſt ſwim to the ſhore, to the rock: ſo doth God daſh all our lower confidences; he cracks our full ſtate; ſeparates us from all our ſenſible enjoyments; and, it may be, gives not a heart to any to ſhow us compaſſion; that, when ſorrows are poured in on all ſides, a man may have nothing in all the world left him, but God's Bible, his word of promiſe, his Chriſt; and here he may reſt, when all means under heaven cannot give relief.

Now, here are the *qualities* of this walk in Chriſt, and here is the *ordinary proviſion* that is given believers for this walk: a guide, a light, a cordial, a purſe, armour, a girdle, ſhoes, and a ſtaff. What know ye of this walk in Chriſt? Theſe are ſome ſcriptural accounts

of it, by which we may try ourſelves. I fear this walk is a myſtery to many of us: theſe that never received Chriſt know nothing of it; and many that have received Chriſt, know but too little of this walk in Chriſt, this life of faith.

O man, woman; what do we think of Chriſt? and what do you think of this walk? Is he not a better portion than all the vanities of time can be to you? Yea, *The portion of Jacob is not like theſe; for, he is the former of all things, and Iſrael is the rod of his inheritance; the Lord of Hoſts is his name*, Jer. li. 19. Is not this walk in him, a better walk than the world are taking, who are walking in the broad way, and reject Chriſt? Alas, Sirs! however lightly you think of Chriſt, and his way now, yet I will aſſure you, if you die not like a ſot, you will think otherwiſe when the dead ſweet begins to break upon you; you would then give a thouſand worlds to have ſaving acquaintance with this way and this walk: and it may be, all that you will here then, inſtead of this, will be, As you have given the devil the flower of your age, ſo give him the bran alſo. O ſeek in to Chriſt, that you may know him, receive him, and walk in him!

SERMON XLI.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The eighth Sermon on this text.]

THERE are two excellent gifts which all men ſtand in need of; and as God only can give them, ſo every one ſhould earneſtly covet them.

The *firſt* is CHRIST, who is expreſly called *the gift of God*, John iv. 10. This gift is the more to be prized, that

that when God gives it, he gives himſelf and his Spirit with it. When a man gets Chriſt, he receive God in and with him; and therefore Chriſt ſays to ſuch, *My Father is your Father, and my God your God:* and when a man receives Chriſt, he gets the Spirit in him and with him; for, *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.*

The *ſecond* is FAITH, which is expreſly called *the gift of God* alſo, Eph. ii. 8. When God gives this latter gift, he juſt gives grace to receive the former gift. Infinite Majeſty cannot give a greater gift than Chriſt; and infinite poverty cannot receive a greater, or more ſuitable gift: Chriſt is the greateſt gift that heaven can give, or earth can receive. There is a giving of Chriſt in the goſpel-offer, which is preſuppoſed to, and conſtitutes the duty of receving: for, *A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven,* John iii. 27. Now, the whole life of religion lies in theſe two things, *viz.* faith's *reception* of Chriſt; and faith's *improvement* of him: both are in our text; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*—We are now upon the application. And

The *fourth* uſe of the doctrine is for *exhortation;* which we ſhall tender to two ſorts of perſons: 1. To *unbelievers* who never received Chriſt, that they *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* 2. To *believers* who have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, that they *walk in him as they have received him.*

Firſt, The firſt branch of the *exhortation* is to all UNBELIEVERS who never have believed in Chriſt, that they believe in him, and receive him: this is the great call of the glorious goſpel to all ſinners that hear this goſpel. And though believers, who have received Chriſt already, be called to receive him again and again; and ſo are not to exclude themſelves, but are to improve the call that is given to unbelievers, in order to their further reception of Chriſt; yet their duty falling more natively in my way, upon the latter part of the text, and ſo in the ſecond branch of the exhortation, I ſhall more eſpecially now addreſs myſelf, as the Lord may aſſiſt, unto thoſe that never yet have truly received Chriſt. O unbelieving

ſoul,

ſoul, who art afar off from God, be exhorted to receive *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* And that I may the more enforce this exhortation, I would, 1. Shew who they are that I call *unbelievers*, that never received Chriſt as yet. 2. Offer ſome *motives* and *conſiderations* to urge you to the receiving of Chriſt. 3. Give ſome *directions*, in order to the receiving of Chriſt. 4. Endeavour to remove ſome *obſtructions*, and anſwer ſome *objections* againſt the receiving of Chriſt.—What I here propoſe, will make me launch further yet, into this goſpel-ſubject, than ever I propoſed, when I entered upon it, though I have enlarged much upon the text already: but yet, it being ſuch a neceſſary comprehenſive theme, containing, in a manner, the whole Bible in one verſe; the whole goſpel in one ſentence; and ſo, being of the utmoſt concern, I think this may be ſufficient ground and reaſon, for my enlarging thereupon, as the Lord may pleaſe to aſſiſt. And,

1*ſt*, I am to ſhew who they are that may be called *unbelievers*, who never yet received Chriſt: for, when I am calling all unbelievers eſpecially to believe, it is fit you know whom I mean; for it is a great bar and hinderance to faith, in multitudes of people, that they think they are believers already, and that they have received Chriſt; and hence they never take a word to them, that is directed to them; and are proof againſt all the calls of the word, becauſe they think they have faith already, they have believed already, and have received Chriſt already. But that they who never received Chriſt, may not deceive themſelves, I will offer you ſome evidences of an unbeliever, that hath not received Chriſt. As the learned ſpeak of twelve ſigns in the heavens, ſo I might tell you of twelve ſigns of unbelief, which, where they take place in their power, diſcover the man was never gained thereby, to the acceptance of Chriſt.

1. The firſt ſign, or diſcovery of reigning unbelief, is *total hardneſs of heart;* when a man is not moved or affected with his own miſery, nor the remedy provided by Chriſt, nor the invitations of grace in the goſpel: It is ſaid, Acts xix. 9. *That divers were hardned and believed not.* An hard heart is one of the devil's impregnable forts, ſtanding out againſt the word, and ſlighting the

the offers of Chriſt. Hardneſs of heart is known by the *fooliſhneſs* of it; *When ſeeing, we ſee not; and hearing, we hear not:* when we have the grammatical knowledge of things, but no ſpiritual diſcerning.—It is alſo known by the *inſenſibleneſs* of it; when men have no feeling of fear and terror by the law; no feeling of peace, joy, and hope by the goſpel; no taſte of the good word at all; but are as ſtones, unmoved with all that is ſpoken. This hardneſs ſhews your unbelief to be ſuch, as that you have not received Chriſt. Believers may feel much heart-hardneſs; but this hardneſs I ſpeak of, is paſt feeling, being *ſeared as with a hot iron.*

2. The ſecond ſign, or diſcovery of unbelief, is the *total neglect of ſpiritual* and *heavenly things;* when men make it not their buſineſs, to look after theſe things; *They made light of it, and one went to his farm, another to his merchandiſe,* Mat. xxii. 5. Do not thouſands bewray their unbelief, and that they never received Chriſt, in that the world hath engroſſed all their care? Would Chriſt, and heavenly things, be thus ſlighted, and lightly eſteemed, if they ſoundly believed in him, or believed the word of God. Surely, when men make the world their main care, and take no heed to the great offers of the goſpel, they do not look upon it as a certain truth, whatever faith they fancy they have.

3. The next ſign, or diſcovery of unbelief, is a *ſecret ſuſpicion concerning the truth of the goſpel;* like him that called the goſpel, *Fabula Chriſti;* they look upon it as an excellent fable, a golden dream, to make fools fond of it; and that all opinions in religion, are but a LOGOMACHY, a mere *ſtrife of words,* a doctrine to ſet the world together by the ears, and that they need not trouble their heads about it. They may have ſome underſtanding about the truth of the goſpel, but no *aſſurance of underſtanding,* Col. ii. 2. It is true, ſuch thoughts may ruſh into the heart of a godly man, but they are abominate and caſt out with indignation: but in wicked men they reign and dwell; they live by theſe kind of principles: natural atheiſm in them is not cured; and that faith they pretend to is but a looſe and wavering opinion, not a grounded and ſettled perſuaſion, of the goſpel:

goſpel: the *aſſurance of underſtanding*, ſpoken of, Col. ii. 2. depends upon experience, and an inward ſenſe of the truth, and is wrought by the Holy Ghoſt, when the goſpel comes *not in word only*, but in *power, and in the demonſtration of the Spirit.*

4. The fourth ſign, or diſcovery of unbelief, is a *ſecret rejecting of the counſels of ſalvation*, Acts xiii. 46. All natural men are children of diſobedience; out of pride ſcorning either the meſſages of God, for they are *fooliſhneſs to them;* or the meſſengers of God, *Is not this the carpenter's ſon?* Is not this preacher of the word ſuch and ſuch an inſignificant perſon? Thus unbelievers fancy of the methods of grace uſed to gain them.

5. The fifth diſcovery of unbelief, is *unholineſs of life and converſation:* the truth of faith brings in *the obedience of faith*, Rom. xvi. 26. Where the prince is, there will his train be; where faith is, there will goſpel-obedience be; and where unbelief is, there is diſobedience: faith hath its train of goſpel ſervices; unbelief hath its train of ungodly practices. When men give themſelves up to drunkenneſs, and whoredom, and Sabbath-breaking, and ſwearing, and lying, and backbiting, and live as carnally and careleſs as infidels, who will believe that they are believers, let them ſay what they will?

6. The next diſcovery of unbelief, is *mens hearing the word, without ever applying it to their own uſe;* without application it worketh not; it cauſeth not a man ſee himſelf involved, and incloſed, and included in the general promiſe or precept, ſo as to give a particular anſwer; as Pſal. xxvii. 8. the call is in the plural, *Seek* YE *my face:* the anſwer is in the ſingular; *Thy face, Lord, will* I *ſeek.* The goſpel-call is general; *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and receive him: the anſwer muſt be particular; *I believe, Lord, help my unbelief.* When people ſuffer truths to hover in the brain without application; or learn things as children do their Catechiſm by rote, never reflecting, what am I? what have I done? where am I going? what will become of me? what effect hath this word upon me? unbelief remains undiſturbed.

7. The ſeventh ſign, or diſcovery of unbelief, is *total apoſtacy*,

apoſtacy, or *falling off from God:* for, as *by faith we ſtand*, and *continue in well doing*, Rom. ii. 7. if we are believers; ſo, by unbelief, or by reaſon of unbelief, men fall off from God, they tire and grow weary of his ſervice; and ſo wholly give up with it.

8. The next ſign, or diſcovery of unbelief, is *final deſperation;* Jer xviii. 12. *There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.* When men think there is no hope, it is in vain to trouble ourſelves: when men think their damnation is fixed, and therefore reſolve to go to hell as faſt as they can; ſuch deſperate wickedneſs there may be in the heart of man, like thoſe, Job xxi. 15. *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhould we have, if we pray unto him?*

9. The ninth diſcovery of unbelief, is *people's diſtruſting all preſent means*, ſaying, *If one come from the dead, they would believe:* if we had oracles or miracles, or if God did ſpeak to us from heaven, then we would believe: but *Moſes and the prophets* are a ſufficient ground of faith, and *if we believe not them, neither would we believe, though one roſe from the dead.* Extraordinary means will not work with them, upon whom ordinary means doth not prevail.

10. The next ſign and diſcovery of unbelief, *is demurs* and *delays* as to a *complete cloſing with Chriſt:* here is a refined degree of unbelief; the man ſeems to approve the report of the goſpel; hath nothing to object againſt Chriſt; but there is a ſecret, dilatory, procraſtinating, delaying ſpirit in him: he hath a will for a future, but not a preſent choice of Chriſt; he cannot yet bid adieu to his beloved luſts: *A little ſleep a little ſlumber* more he muſt have, in the lap of his Delilah. Luke ix. 59. *Follow me*, ſays Chriſt; why, ſays the man? *Lord, ſuffer me firſt to go and bury my Father;* excuſe me for a while. Again, ver. 61. *Lord, I will follow;* but let it be deferred for ſome time; *let me firſt go and bid them farewel which are at home at my houſe.* Thus awakened ſinners put off Chriſt, as Felix did Paul, with delays; theſe delays are but a ſly rejection of Chriſt: a *will* for hereafter is a preſent *nill;* your reſolving will

hereafter ſays you have no heart at preſent. But the longer you delay, the more averſe will you be from believing: and before your hereafter comes, you may be in hell.

11. The next ſign and diſcovery of unbelief, is *men's receiving a falſe Chriſt*, an idol of their own fancy, inſtead of the true Chriſt: they that compound Chriſt, or add any thing to him, make to themſelves a falſe Chriſt; as they that would have Chriſt and the world both, Chriſt and their luſts too: Chriſt they muſt have to ſatisfy their conſciences; and luſts they muſt have to ſatisfy their heart. Hence they meditate, and meditate a league between Chriſt and their darling idols: ſuch a mixed Chriſt is a falſe Chriſt. Thus many would make their own righteouſneſs, their tears, and melting affections, in part, if not wholly, their Chriſt. As the *goſpel* hypocrite makes his very faith his Chriſt; ſo the *legal* hypocrite makes his duties his Chriſt. The *political* hypocrite will join his carnal prudence with Chriſt's wiſdom, and ſo make it in part his Chriſt. The *refined* hypocrite will make the common aſſiſtance and influences of the Spirit reſts to him, and put them in the room of Chriſt. Are not all theſe ſo many falſe Chriſts? Yea, a divided Chriſt is a falſe Chriſt, while men would receive him as a Jeſus, to ſave them from hell; but not as a Lord, to rule over their luſts: they would ſhare in his benefits, but not in his perſon. There is ſomething in Chriſt that they like, and ſomething that they diſlike; they like the *blood* that came forth of his heart, to waſh their guilty conſciences; but they diſlike the *water* that came forth alſo, to waſh their filthy hearts.

12. The laſt ſign and diſcovery of unbelief, is *men's receiving a truth Chriſt in a falſe manner;* as when Chriſt is received, but not in his grandeur. A prince is then received aright, when he is received according to his dignity: if a ſubject ſhould receive his prince, and entertain him no otherwiſe than he would do a peaſant, or country neighbour, this would be interpreted a contempt: So, if Chriſt be not received according to his grandeur, and dignity, and ſtate, he counts it a contempt rather than a right reception of him. Chriſt will be received as a LORD, or not at all: he will be a KING,

or

or nothing. This was the ſin of the Jews, they could be content to receive Chriſt as a great Prophet, as the Mahometans do; but they did not receive him according to his grandeur, or that greatneſs and glory which he was inveſted with, and therefore they are ſaid *not to receive him;* John i. 11. *He came to his own, but his own received him not.* Whereas John ſays of the believing Jews that received him, that they *beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;* that is, they received him in all his grandeur, ſplendor, majeſty, and glory. Thus men receive not Chriſt, but ſhew their unbelief, even in receiving the true Chriſt in a falſe manner. When Chriſt is not received as he is offered in the goſpel, he is received in a falſe manner: He is offered fully, freely, cordially, and conſtantly; and the right reception is alſo full, free, cordial, and conſtant: men may therefore receive him in a falſe manner, which is as good as rejecting of him; when they do not receive him fully, without dividing him; freely, without buying him; cordially, without reluctancy; and conſtantly, without repentance, or being diſſatisfied with the bargain.

Now, let all theſe twelve ſigns and diſcoveries of unbelief be conſidered, and they will ſhew, how many pretenders to faith are yet unbelievers: even all that are under the power of heart-hardneſs; live in the total neglect of ſpiritual and heavenly things; in a ſecret ſuſpicion of the truth of the goſpel; and a ſecret rejecting of the counſel of God; in habitual unholineſs of life and converſation; and that hear the word without any application ſuitably to themſelves; who give themſelves up to a total apoſtacy, and a final deſperation: a diſtruſting of all preſent means; to delaying and demuring about cloſing with Chriſt; who either receive a falſe Chriſt, or yet a true Chriſt in a faſe manner. Theſe are unbelievers, that have not yet received Chriſt the Lord. I now proceed.

2*dly*, To the next thing propoſed, namely, to offer ſome *motives* and *conſiderations* to urge you to the receiving of Chriſt. If any here would know what is that ſtar, by which they may be led to the place where the

Lord Jeſus lies? why, it is juſt this everlaſting goſpel; it points out Chriſt, ſaying, *Behold the Lamb of God.* There are but two great requeſts that heaven makes to us all by this glorious goſpel: the firſt requeſt is to all *Chriſtleſs* perſons whatſoever, that hear this goſpel, *viz.* That they *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* The ſecond is to all *Chriſtians*, that have received him, *viz.* That they *walk in him: As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.* Now, you would know before hand, that no motive will move you, no argument will perſuade you to receive Chriſt, unleſs it be backed with the almighty power of God: and therefore if you think ſalvation a buſineſs worth your while, O ſend up an ejaculatory prayer to heaven, that God would make this goſpel, the power of God to your ſalvation, through Jeſus Chriſt. We are now calling you in the name of the great and eternal God, to believe in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and receive him, ſo as you may walk in him, till you come to *walk with him in white* among the redeemed above: and there is this general motive, that ſhould be inſtead of a thouſand to you all; and which, if duely regarded, there would be no need of any more; and that is, the *ſupreme authority of God the Father* is interpoſed in this matter: *For, this is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 John iii. 23. And, ſhall we think nothing to trample upon the authority, and contemn the command of that God, who can command us to hell in a moment? Here God ſums up all the ten commands, as it were, into one; and ſays, If you obey this, you obey all; if you break this, you break all: the man that doth not believe in the Son of God, he breaks both the tables of the law at one daſh; and violates every precept of the law in the moſt dreadful manner. You have heard ſometimes, how the ſin of Adam, in eating the forbidden fruit, was at once a breach of all the ten commands. But do you conſider, that your unbelief, in not receiving Chriſt, is a trampling under foot the authority of God in every one of theſe commands, and that in the moſt grievous manner. —The man that receiveth not Chriſt, he rejecteth God himſelf as *his God;* for he is not the God of any man, neither

neither will be, but in Chriſt.—The man that receives not Chriſt, all his *worſhip* is at beſt but idolatry and ſuperſtition; for God cannot be worſhipped acceptably any other way than in Chriſt, who is the *image of the inviſible God.*—The rejecter of Chriſt is a profaner of the *name* of God; for, *God's name is in him:* and it is in him eſpecially that God maketh himſelf known.—The man that doth not receive Chriſt, he cannot ſanctify the *Sabbath-day*, nor hallow it; for all the days of his life, wherein he lives without Chriſt, are unholy days; his whole time is a ſinful time.—The man in this caſe, is *diſobedient* to his heavenly Parent, diſhonours his heavenly Father; and ſo can never put due reſpect upon earthly parents.—He kills his own ſoul, and crucifies the Lord of glory afreſh, and ſo can never have a right love to man.—He is guilty of the groſſeſt *ſpiritual adultery*, in departing from the Lord, and cannot be otherwiſe clean.—He *ſteals* and robs God of his glory, ſo cannot in other reſpects be altogether innocent.—He bears *falſe witneſs* againſt God, by making God a liar, and rejecting the teſtimony that God gives concerning his Son; and having ſo little regard to God's name, he cannot have much for his neighbour's—And, finally, he is guilty of *covetouſneſs*, which is idolatry, and that of the moſt attrocious nature; for, he through unbelief, and rejecting of Chriſt as a Saviour, and thinking of ſalvation by his own means, doth covet that glory and honour which is only due to God and Chriſt, to be aſcribed to himſelf: ſelf is his God, and ſelf-righteouſneſs is his Chriſt; and what will he not covet, who covets to be in God's room?

Thus the ſin of unbelief, in rejecting of Chriſt, doth at one ſtroak daſh the whole commands of God to pieces; and therefore, no wonder that this be his great command, that we *believe in the name of his Son:* ſeeing alſo that, by receiving him, we fulfil the whole law, namely, by receiving him for our righteouſneſs and ſanctification; for in receiving him for our righteouſneſs, we fulfil the law as a covenant, and that perſonally in him, who hath yielded perfect obedience in our room, and paid the penalty alſo for its violation; and in receiving him for our ſanctification, we fulfil the law as a rule,

by

by a perfection of parts, through his ſanctifying Spirit in us, which goes on to a perfection of degrees in heaven. Therefore, I ſay, when we reject Chriſt, we reject the great command of God, and contemn his authority in the moſt ſignal inſtance. Know then that, by the authority of the eternal God, you are obliged to believe; and let this general motive be in the room of all.

But I ſhall name ſome more particular motives; and there are theſe ſix conſiderations that ſhould, and would, if the Lord would powerfully concur with them, engage us to receive Chriſt. 1. Conſider *whom* you are called to receive. 2. How *few* of the world do receive him. 3. *What* you ſhall receive when you receive Chriſt. 4. What you *muſt* receive, if you receive not Chriſt. 5. What is the *malignity* and *danger* of *unbelief*, in rejecting of Chriſt. And, 6. What is the *excellency* and *neceſſity* of *faith*, in receiving the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—Now, we would eſſay to open ſome of theſe at the time; and earneſtly beg your attention to what may be ſaid.

[1.] Conſider WHOM you are called to receive. It is no leſs than the *Lord of glory;* the *Lord, mighty in battle:* we are exhorted from this very conſideration, Pſal. xxiv. 7, 8. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting doors, and the King of glory ſhall come in. Who is this King of glory? the Lord ſtrong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.* Who would not caſt open theſe gates, to receive ſuch an honourable gueſt! O let us open the gate of our underſtanding, to behold him; and open the gate of our will, to chooſe him; and open the gate of our affections, to embrace him; and open the gate of our whole heart and ſoul, to receive him. O what an excellent One is he! What excellent company for travellers! What excellent food for the hungry, and drink for the thirſty! What excellent medicine for the diſeaſed, and excellent ſalvation for the needy! Man is the excellency of the creatures, grace is the excellency of man, glory is the excellency of grace; but Chriſt is the excellency of all. It is greater honour to be one of Chriſt's little ones, than one of the world's great ones. O conſider whom you are to receive, it is not a man or an angel; but he that is Lord of men and angels; *The*

Prince

Prince of the kings of the earth; He is the plant of renown; the chief among ten thouſand. His beauty and glory outſhines the ſun in its meridian ſplendor: *He is fairer than the ſons of men; he is altogether lovely.* He is the *deſire of all nations;* and hence believers in all nations, both before and ſince his incarnation, have eſteemed him moſt deſirable: and ſhall we find in our hearts to reject and deſpiſe him? He is the *conſolation of Iſrael;* and to all *who believe he is precious:* And indeed every thing in him is precious. *What is in Chriſt?* Why, if you duly conſidered what is in Chriſt, you would never reject or neglect him; for God is in Chriſt; 2 Cor. v. 19. *For God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* He is *God manifeſted in the fleſh;* this is the *great myſtery of godlineſs,* 1 Tim. iii. 16. A Godhead dwelling in fleſh, is the world's wonder: it is ſuch a wonder, ſuch a myſtery, that the world cannot receive it: yet God is in him, ſo as in receiving Chriſt you receive God. But here it may be aſked, *What of God is in Chriſt?* Why conſider,

1. The *authority* of God is in Chriſt; *My name is in him,* Exod. xxiii. 21. God hath authorized and ſealed him; for, *Him hath God the Father ſealed,* John vi. 27. He hath a commiſſion, under the great ſeal of heaven, to ſave you; and therefore he comes in his Father's name, as well as in his own, to *ſeek and ſave you.* And this glorious One is come this day, in this goſpel, to ſeek your acceptance of him, as a Saviour every way well qualified to ſave even the chief of ſinners. Oh! ſhall ſuch a One be rejected!

2. The *wiſdom* of God is in him; *Chriſt is the wiſdom of God,* 1 Cor. i. 24.; and *in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge,* Col. ii. 3. Never did the wiſdom of God diſplay itſelf in ſuch an illuſtrious and tranſcendant manner, before the eyes of men and angels, as it hath done in Chriſt: wiſdom in uniting the moſt diſtant extremes, God and man, and God's glory and man's happineſs: he is the centre of the union.

3. The *power* of God is in him; as he is the wiſdom, ſo he is *the power of God,* 1 Cor. i. 24.: and *all power in heaven and earth is given unto him,* Mat. xxviii. 18.

He

He hath not only the wiſdom of God to contrive, but the power of God to accompliſh and perform whatever concerneth us, and our eternal happineſs. In an eſſential way, he hath all power as he is God; and in a donative way, he hath all power as he is God-man Mediator: therefore, *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt.* You are called to receive a Chriſt, by the power of Chriſt; to receive One that can give you power to receive; as one abſolutely feeble, you are invited to come and to take hold of his ſtrength, that you may be enabled to go *from ſtrength to ſtrength.*

4. The *Spirit* of God is in him; *I have put my Spirit upon him,* Iſa. xlii. 1.; *God gives not the Spirit by meaſure to him.* Men and angels that have the Spirit of God in them, they have their meaſures; ſome more ſome leſs of the Spirit; but the Spirit is in Chriſt without meaſure; *He is anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows:* and he diſpenſes to every one their ſhare, as ſeemeth fit to him; for he hath the communication of the Spirit in his hand: *The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand: He received gifts for men,* and *he giveth gifts to men.*

5. The *righteouſneſs* of God is in him, by which only a poor guilty ſinner can be juſtified before God; for he is JEHOVAH's *righteous Servant, who brings in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, and brings it near to juſtify many:* for, *we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him,* 2 Cor. v. 21. *He is the Lord our righteouſneſs,* Jer. xxiii. 6. JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU; the Lord that juſtifies us, and is our juſtifying righteouſneſs. And this righteouſneſs is meritorious of all bleſſings, being every way perfect and complete. And therefore in him is the righteouſneſs and and juſtice of God manifeſted; *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God,* Rom. iii. 25. Again,

6. The *love* and *mercy* of God is in him: the very yearning bowels of divine love are in him. What is Chriſt but the love of God warpt up in a garment of fleſh and blood? 1 John iv. 9, 10. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us: and herein is love,—that God*

God ſent his Son. This is the higheſt flight that ever divine love made; and higher than this it cannot mount. —The *mercies* and compaſſions of God are all in Chriſt, Jude ver. 21. God's mercy is the thing that poor ſinners cry for, when breathing out their laſt, as the only thing that can do them good. O! what would a man give for mercy, in the moment of death, and mercy at the great day! Why, if you receive Chriſt, you receive the mercy of God; but out of him there is no mercy to be expected out of God's hand; for he will never ſhew mercy to the prejudice of his juſtice; and it is only in Chriſt, that mercy and juſtice meet together, and harmoniouſly embrace each other.

7. The *ſalvation* of God is in him; *Neither is there ſalvation in any other,* Acts iv. 12. Chriſt is the door of ſalvation; and faith is the key that opens that door; or it is juſt the man's entering in by it: and therefore, they that receive not Chriſt, they exclude themſelves from all hope of ſalvation; for the ſalvation of God is no where to be found but in Chriſt: for, *In vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills or multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael,* Jer. iii. 22. And ſuch as receive Chriſt for ſalvation, will, in the iſſue, take up old Simeon's ſong, *Now, letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation,* Luke ii. 29.

8. The *fulneſs* of God is in Chriſt: *It hath pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell,* Col. i. 19. And chap. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* The fulneſs all God's attributes and perfections are in Chriſt. He is the *brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* And there is a meritorious fulneſs of bleſſings in him, to be communicated unto the members of his body, being *full of grace and truth,* John i. 14. O what a full Saviour! what a full Chriſt are ye called to receive!—Thus you ſee what of God is in him, to induce us to receive him; and whom it is that we are called to receive: he is Chriſt, he is Jeſus, he is the Lord: ſhall we reject ſuch an One?

[2.] The *ſecond* motive is: Conſider how FEW in the world do receive him; notwithſtanding of theſe glori-

ous excellencies that are in him, yet the moſt part of the world do reject him: *He came to his own, and his own received him not*, John i. 11. The language of the moſt part is, *Who is the Lord, that we ſhould ſerve him? We will not have this man to reign over us.* Now, *is this nothing to you, all you that paſs by?* Do you think it a ſmall matter, to ſee the world crucifying the Lord of glory, and renewing the bloody tragedy again? And ſhall you have a hand in this interpretative murder alſo? The more they be that reject him, the more cordially ſhould you receive him. What! ſay you? who would reject ſuch an one as Chriſt? Is it poſſible that any will be ſo mad as to deſpiſe this plant of renown? Yea, there is a whole generation of Chriſt deſpiſers, and ſee that you be not in the midſt of them. I will give you a repreſentation of them, and ſhew what they are like, that you may know them, and know if you be among them that are rejecters of Chriſt, in theſe eight particulars.

1. There is a *Gallio-like* generation, that *care for none of theſe things.* Are there not many among us, that will not give a fig for the richeſt offers of Chriſt in the goſpel? They will not give a fig for the ordinances of Chriſt; they will not give a farthing for the goſpel; they will not give a farthing for a ſermon concerning Chriſt; they will not give a ſtraw for a week day's preaching, nor think it worth their while, to go the length of a ſtreet for it: ſo little do they care for Chriſt and his goſpel, that they will not give a ſtraw to ſtay away from a Sabbath-day's ſermon; they care for none of thoſe things. A ſenſeleſs ſtory of Thomas the Rhymer would go better down with them.

2. There is a *Demas-like* generation, who are overfondly attached unto the things of this world: *Demas hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent world.* They diſcover their rejecting of Chriſt, by their putting the world in his room; *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* And they that love not the Father, they love not the Son, whatever they may pretend and profeſs to do; for, *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him.* It is not Chriſt, but the world they are taken up with.

3. There

3. There is a *Pilate-like* generation, who, though they *find nothing againſt the man*, yet will cry, *Take you him, and crucify him.* They find no fault with him, and yet are content that he be crucified: they have no objection againſt him; and yet are content though the world trample upon and abuſe him; they are eaſy and indifferent: they have nothing to ſay againſt him, and yet they are content to live without him. Surely they are rejecters of Chriſt.

4. There is a *Felix-like* generation, that will ſay as he did to Paul, *Go your way at this time, and I will hear thee at a more convenient ſeaſon.* They are not for hearing Chriſt to-day; they are for putting off to another ſeaſon; and that ſeaſon may never come: *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;* for all the world cannot promiſe you a to-morrow, or another offer of Chriſt. How ſad is it, that the world ſhould be ſtill for delays! A delay for the future, is a denial for the preſent. You reject him, if you do not preſently hearken to him.

5. There is an *Agrippa-like* generation; *Almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian.* They that are but half perſuaded, are wholly loſt and undone, unleſs they be wholly brought over to Chriſt, and altogether perſuaded. They are but almoſt perſuaded to receive Chriſt, are but almoſt believers; and they that are but almoſt believers, are but almoſt ſaved; and they that are but almoſt ſaved, they will be altogether damned; and more fearfully damned, than if they had never been ſo near to ſalvation. O ſeek to have it to ſay, *Lord, thou haſt perſuaded me, and I was perſuaded.*

6. There is a *Herod-like* generation, who can *hear the word gladly, and do many things;* but an Herodias is dearer to him than a John the Baptiſt whoſe head is ſerved up in a charger to pleaſe and gratify her. They are but rejecters of Chriſt, that, rather than be croſſed in a Delilah, and touched in a particular luſt and idol, will give up with all their pretended kindneſs to miniſters and diſpenſers of the word: touch them in the ſore heel, and then they are perſecutors, either by tongue or hand, as well as in heart: if they have not an oppor-

tunity of open violence, yet at leaſt John Baptiſt's head is brought in a charger, by and by into every company: the miniſter will be beheaded of his good name, by reproach and ignominy caſt upon him. If any faithful reproof, that reflects upon your honour, or croſſes your carnal ſatisfaction, raiſe in you a perſecuting ſpirit againſt the reprover, it is an evidence of your being but a rejecter of Chriſt.

7. There is a *Judas-like* generation, who *betray the Son of man with a kiſs;* with the kiſs of a profeſſion, with the kiſs of a feigned ſubjection, with a kiſs of flattery, or a kiſs of baſtard faith, that never had God for the father of it, nor the word of God for the mother of it: *They profeſs to know God, but in works they deny him; having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof.* They want but an opportunity to betray Chriſt; whatever profeſſion of love to him they make, yet, whenever the trial of temptation comes, they betray his cauſe, they betray his truth, they betray his people, they betray religion, and are ready to turn to any way, or do any thing that the world deſires them, rather than loſe the bag: yea, they will *ſell Chriſt for thirty pieces of ſilver;* and Eſau-like, *ſell their birth-right for a meſs of pottage.* They will give up with Chriſt, and with a good cauſe, and a good conſcience too, for a worldly trifle.

8. There is a *Balaam-like* generation, that will *deſire to die the death of the righteous, and to have their laſt end like his;* yet they love not to live the life of the righteous. They would deſire to die as ſaints, but to live like pagans: they would deſire to have Chriſt when they are dying, but they care not for Chriſt when they are living. But, how fooliſh is that deſire, whereby they would die in the Lord, but live without him! yea, the life of many is a practical ſaying with the Jews, Away with Chriſt, way with him; away with him and give me Barabbas. The hearts of many ſay, Away with that Chriſt whom you call ſo glorious and tranſcendent, and give me the world, give me my luſts and idols.

In theſe eight particulars you ſee a ſight of the world, the temper and diſpoſition of the moſt part, and how Chriſt is deſpiſed and rejected of men; and ſhall that be your

your diſpoſition too? Can you find in your heart to turn your back upon this glorious, matchleſs Prince of the kings of the earth, with the reſt of the world? Are you content that he get no backing to follow him and praiſe him? O the more you have rejected him, the more ſhould you receive him. Again,

[3.] The *third* motive is, conſider WHAT you will receive if you receive Chriſt. I remember upon the doctrinal part *, when I ſhewed the reaſons, why they that have received Chriſt, are to walk in him, in ſhewing what encouragement a man that receiveth Chriſt, hath to walk in him; I told of eight thing that a believer receives when he receiveth Chriſt, namely, that he receiveth pardon, peace, grace, the promiſes, the Spirit, the adoption of children, a title to heaven, and even all things, when he receiveth Chriſt: but this ALL, that he receiveth in Chriſt, will admit of infinitely more particulars. I ſhall, at this time, name a few things more that you will receive, if you receive Chriſt.

1. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *light* with him; for, *He is the light of the world;* and, *in his light ſhall we ſee light clearly.* You ſhall be in a caſe to ſay, *Once I was blind, but now I ſee;* once darkneſs, but *now light in the Lord.* If Chriſt be not received, you have no light in you. O poor ignorant ſoul, dark and blind creature, ready to fall into utter darkneſs! may not this be motive enough for you, to look after Chriſt and ſeek an intereſt in him, that if you follow him, you *ſhall not walk in darkneſs,* but *ſhall have the light of life;* you *ſhall ſee the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt? Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God?* And that ſight will be an introduction to the viſion of his glory, for ever in heaven. Surely if you were not utterly blind, you would not reject this light. The light of the natural ſun is deſirable, to any that have eyes to ſee it; but ten thouſand times more is the light of this Sun of righteouſneſs; yea, infinitely more than the light of reaſon, or the light of learning, and human wiſdom; for you may have that light, and

* *Viz.* On the fourth general head, p. 105, 106.

yet

yet a dead man; but this is the *light of life*, John viii. 12. Therefore,

2. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *life*; ſpiritual life, *eternal* life; John vi. 47. *He that believeth on me, hath eternal life:* He is *the reſurrection and the life;* and *he came to give life, and to give it more abundantly.* He himſelf is the *bread of life* that you ſhould live upon; and for maintaining of your life, you ſhould be fed with the *fineſt of the wheat*, and with *honey out of the rock.* Why, man, you would give much for your natural life if it was in hazard; but what think you of ſpiritual and eternal life? The life of juſtification and ſanctification? the life of joy and conſolation? the life of communion and fellowſhip with God? the life of begun glory? and to be in caſe to ſay, *To me to live is Chriſt?* Chriſt is the ALPHA and OMEGA, the giver and reſtorer of this life; the maintainer and preſerver of it; the food and medicine of it; and the very buſineſs of the man's life: *To me to live is Chriſt.*

3. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *liberty;* John viii. 36. *If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed.* You ſhall have freedom from the iron yoke of the law, in its terrible threatenings, legal commandments, and dreadful curſes, which now you are under: freedom from the wrath of God; freedom from your idols; for he proclaims *liberty to captives;* and he hath the key of the priſon-houſe, to open your priſon-doors.—It is a dark priſon in which you are, wherein you can underſtand no more ſavingly of God, than the ſtones of the wall: but he ſays to the priſoners, *Go forth, and behold the light.* —It is a fearful pit wherein you are, in which you will be ſurprized with the fear of death and hell, if conſcience but awaken upon you; but he comes to *deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time ſubject to bondage.* Such freedom from the ſting of death doth he give, that if you receive him, you may welcome death when it comes, ſaying, Come, ſtingleſs death; welcome, O friend!

4. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *advantage* by every *ordinance*, and particularly you receive the good of the word: *The word preached doth not profit, not being*

ing mixed with faith, Heb. iv. 2. But now, when it is mixed with faith, and receiving of Chriſt, then the word preached ſhall profit, and you ſhall pick out ſome ſpiritual advantage out of this word, and that word, as we uſe to pick out of every corner of the ſhell that is broken, (as of a walnut,) the kernel that is in it; ſo will you be in caſe to pick out the kernel of this and the other word and ordinance, and get foot and nouriſhment to your ſoul. Out of the ſame roſe there is honey to the bee, and poiſon to the ſpider; ſo, the word and ordnance that proves the *ſavour of life* to one, proves the *ſavour of death* to another.

5. If you receive Chriſt, you ſhall receive *advantage* by every *providence;* Rom. viii. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.* Merciful providences will make you thankful, and croſs providences will make you humble; and you ſhall have occaſion to *ſing of mercy and judgement.* And though under a temptation, or the prevalence of unbelief, you may come to ſay in an hour of diſtreſs, *All theſe things are againſt you;* yet you ſhall find all moving for you, and that *he hath done all things well.*

6. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *righteouſneſs* even a *rob of righteouſneſs*, in which you may appear boldly before the tribunal of infinite juſtice, and before the throne of infinite holineſs, without being aſhamed or afraid: becauſe holineſs is vindicated, juſtice is ſatisfied, and the law is magnified, by the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which ſhall be imputed to you; ſo as you ſhall be in caſe to ſay, *Surely in the Lord have I righteouſneſs.*

7. If you receive Chriſt, you receive *ſtrength* as well as righteouſneſs: ſtrength to enable you in all your duties; and alſo ſtrength to ſupport you in all your difficulties: *Surely in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* Yea, you ſhall be able to *do all things through Chriſt ſtrenthening you.* You ſhall be *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might:* and *ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* Let this be an argument to thoſe who are

by

by nature without ſtrength to *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, that they may be ſtrengthened to *walk in him*.

8. If you receive Chriſt, you ſhall receive *ſupply of all your wants*: when *the Lord is your ſhepherd, you ſhall not want*, Pſalm xxiii. 1. You ſhall want no good thing; you ſhall receive the ſupply of all your ſpiritual wants; out of Chriſt's fulneſs, you will receive *grace for grace*: your *God will ſupply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Chriſt*: Yea, you will get a ſupply of all your temporal wants and loſſes; you receive that which will be abundantly up-making to you, in all your loſſes. Have you loſt huſband, wife, children, or any dear and intimate relation? Well, this may be very afflicting, but Chriſt can well compenſate all loſſes of that kind; for he is, and well be to his people, better than ten thouſand wives, or children, or familiar concerns; for he is *all in all*.

And, in a word, in your receiving Chriſt, you ſhall receive more than *eye hath ſeen*, or *ear heard*, or *heart conceived* here, and an *immortal crown of glory* hereafter. Yea, he that receiveth Chriſt receiveth God; Matth. x. 40. *He that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me* And what can be more ſaid? He is an *heir of God*. As he that receiveth a tree, gets not only the fruit, but all that is in the tree, and all that it can produce to himſelf; ſo he that gets Chriſt, gets not only the fruit that grows upon the tree of life, but all that is in the tree to himſelf: and, ſince God is in Chriſt; he that receiveth Chriſt, receiveth God. A man may eat of the fruit of a tree, and yet have no intereſt in the tree: even ſo, many eat ſome of the ſweet fruit of this tree, in common providence and grace; but he that receiveth Chriſt hath intereſt in the tree itſelf, as well as in the fruit; yea, here the believing eater grows into the tree, being a branch thereof; *I am the vine, ye are the branches*, John xv. 5. Yea, he hath the tree of life planted in his heart; *Chriſt dwells in their hearts by faith*, Eph. iii. 17. It were groſs to aſk, how Chriſt in heaven, and believers on earth, can be ſo cloſely united; for man and wife are *one fleſh*, though a thouſand miles aſſunder; much more Chriſt and the believer

believer *one ſpirit*, though the viſible heavens interveen betwixt them, 1 Cor. vi. 17.

[4.] The *fourth* motive is, Conſider what you RECEIVE if you receive not Chriſt: Why, there are four things you muſt receive, if you receive not Chriſt: you muſt receive luſts, for your laws; the devil, for your maſter; the curſe, for your comfort; and hell, for your portion and reward.

1. If you receive not Chriſt, you muſt receive *luſts* for your *laws:* either you muſt receive Chriſt or Barabbas. When you receive not Chriſt, you receive ſin, and ſin ſhall have dominion over you, while you reject the Saviour, who ſaves from ſin: and what for a gueſt is ſin, which you receive in Chriſt's room?—It is a God-oppoſing gueſt; for, it is *enmity againſt God.*—It is a God-provoking gueſt; for it expoſes you to his fury.—It is a ſoul-defiling gueſt; it defiles all the houſe where it is; nay, makes you abominable to God.—It is a moſt expenſive gueſt; it will coſt you dear, even the loſs of your immortal ſoul.

2. If you receive not Chriſt, you muſt receive the *devil* for your *maſter;* for there is no midſt, either Chriſt or the devil muſt be your maſter: and when you receive ſuch a gueſt as this, in the room of Chriſt, do you conſider what for a gueſt, a dreadful gueſt the devil is? He is a gueſt that will blind you; for, *the god of this world doth blind the minds of them that believe not.*—He is a gueſt that will *harden* you ſo, as you ſhall be like the adamant, and get no good of word and rod, ordinances or providences.—He is a gueſt that will *deceive* you; either by perſuading you that you have received Chriſt already, that you are a good enough believer; or by perſuading you to believe untruths, and turn you into *damnable errors to believe a lie.* Whence come all the errors of our day, but from the devil, who is a *liar from the beginning?*—He is a gueſt that will not only delude you, but *deſtroy* you, and devour you; for, *He goeth about as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.* And as now he is your tempter, ſo afterwards he will be your accuſer.

3. If you receive not Chriſt, you muſt receive the

curſe for your *comfort:* no comfort in all the word of God belongs to you that are *rejecters* of Chriſt, but only the curſe of the law; *Curſed is every one, that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* You receive more and more of this ſentence of condemnation; the more you live in unbelief, the more doth this curſe take place, binding you over to more and more of wrath; *He that believeth not, is condemned already; and the wrath of God abideth on him.* You are under the wrath of God: and, oh! what is that? *The wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion:* but, oh! what is the wrath of God like! Surely, *the thunder of his wrathful power none can underſtand.* Nebuchadnezzar was in great wrath and fury, when the viſage of his countenance changed againſt the three children; and he commanded the furnace to be made ſeven times hotter: but, oh! what is the wrath of God when he is as angry as Nebuchadnezzar was! And truly he *is angry with the wicked every day.* Therefore,

4. If you receive not Chriſt, you muſt receive *hell* for your *portion;* Mark xvi. 16. *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* Do not think it is a miniſter only that ſays it; it is the word of God: and if you think not the SAY of a God, the word of a God of truth enough, he hath SWORN it, as well as ſaid it; you have the oath of God interpoſed in the matter; Heb. iii. 18. *He ſwears in his wrath, that you ſhall not enter into his reſt:* And to whom does he thus ſwear in his wrath? even to them that *believe not.* And, oh! what think you of this damnation which God ſwears you ſhall receive, if you receive not Chriſt? It will be damnation proportioned to the means you have enjoyed; damnation proportioned to the worth of the blood of Chriſt, which you have trampled under foot. And, O! what think you of that debt which is as great as the price of the blood of Chriſt? Will you ever be able to pay it? No, by no means: you will ſink under it for ever. It will be wrath proportioned to the greatneſs of that ſalvation which you neglect. See Heb. ii. 3. and chap. x. 29, 30, 31.

And now, what do you think of all this, that I have been ſaying? Is there no weight in this conſideration,

namely,

namely, whom you are called to receive; and how the moſt part of the world are rejecting Chriſt; and what you ſhall receive if you receive Chriſt; and what you muſt receive if you receive not Chriſt? Do you think all theſe things fancies, or realities? If the devil be tempting you to think they are but fancies; I tell you, in the name of the great God, that they are realities: and you ſhall find them ſadly to be ſo when death's cold ſweat begins to break upon you; when your eye-ſtrings begin to looſe; and the union between the ſoul and body begins to be diſſolved, and you called to go to the tribunal of God. O man, then, *to-day, while it is called to-day, harden not your heart as in the provocation.* Do you know that you ſhall hear another offer of Chriſt again? Nay, all the world cannot aſſure you, that you ſhall have another Sabbath-day; nor certify you that you ſhall have a to-morrow.

I think there is as much weight in what hath been ſaid, as may, at leaſt, engage you, when you go home, to go to your knees, and cry, "Lord, what a ſad caſe "am I in while without Chriſt! O give me Chriſt, or "elſe I die! O give me the ſpirit of faith, that I may "receive Chriſt! for I periſh eternally without Chriſt!" —May the Lord himſelf awaken and quicken you.

SERMON XLII.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The ninth Sermon on this text.]

AS it is not ſafe walking cloſs by the ſea-ſide, when the waves are tumbling out upon the ſhore; ſo it is not ſafe to walk in this world, according to the courſe thereof, when the deluge of God's wrath is certainly

breaking out upon it: it is the ſafeſt courſe to get into the Ark, and walk therein. In this goſpel there is an Ark provided, even Chriſt; and there is a window opened in the ſide of this Ark; yea, the hand of mercy put forth at this window, to pull in ſhelterleſs doves, that can find no reſt elſewhere. Many hover without, till the flood waſh them off from the ſides of the Ark, and they periſh eternally: but happy they that are taught to fly in, by the wing of faith; and this is what here we are called to, namely, to *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and ſo to walk in him.*

In the preceding diſcourſe, we mentioned four motives to engage you to receive Chriſt. We now proceed to the other two. The firſt of which we ſhall diſmiſs at the time.

[5.] The *fifth* motive we adduce is, Conſider the *malignity of unbelief* in *rejecting Chriſt*, or not receiving of him, as he is offered to us in the goſpel. Now, the *malignity of unbelief* will appear, if you conſider both the *ſinfulneſs* and the *hurtfulneſs* of it.

(1.) The *ſinfulneſs* of unbelief in rejecting Chriſt, and not receiving him. If a man be guilty of murder, adultery, or the like, preſently he is odious, and juſtly looked upon as a monſtrous ſinner; but yet your ſin of unbelief goes a ſtep beyond all theſe, if you duly conſider it; for, when the Holy Ghoſt is ſent to *convince the world of ſin*, John xvi. 9. he pitches upon this ſin, as if there was no other that the world needed to be convinced of; *He will convince the world of ſin, becauſe they* BELIEVE *not on the Son of God:* Why? becauſe there is more ſinfulneſs in it, than any other. Oh! what an abyſs of iniquity is in the bowels of unbelief! What made the old world ſo ſecure, before the deluge came and ſwept them away, but unbelief? And, how comes it that now, both wiſe and fooliſh virgins do ſlumber, before the coming of the Bridegroom, but from unbelief? Unbelief is virtually all ſin. Scandalous ſins have more infamy, but unbelief hath more of obliquity and guilt in it, it being againſt the greateſt laws, and ſtrongeſt obligations. But, more particularly, we may take up the

the ſinfulneſs of unbelief in the following particulars; ſuch as theſe,

1. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief in rejecting Chriſt will appear, if we conſider it with reſpect to GOD; for, unbelief doth diſhonour God more than any other ſin, by calling in queſtion all his attributes, and caſting an affront upon all his perfections: no greater indignity can be done to the glory of God, than is done by unbelief; it hath a mouth full of blaſphemy againſt God.—Why? by unbelief we trample upon the *authority* of God that commands us to believe: it is a proud contempt of the divine command, under the maſk of humility; for, unbelief doth ordinarily paſs vailed under the vizard of ſome refined virtue; and that is one of the reaſons why it is ſo little ſeen, and that people are convinced of other ſins and breaches of the commands of God, but not of this: beſides that groſs ſins, the conviction of them may ariſe from a natural conſcience, but the light of nature doth not lead men to the conviction of unbelief; it being a goſpel, and more ſpiritual ſin; however, the more ſpiritual it is, the worſe, in trampling upon the authority of that God who is a Spirit.—By unbelief, as we deſpiſe his authority, ſo we deny his *faithfulneſs*, and charge him with a lie; *He that believeth not hath made God a liar; becauſe he believeth not the record that God gave concerning his Son,* 1 John v. 10. *As he that believeth, ſets to his ſeal that God is true;* ſo, *he that believeth not,* ſets his ſeal to that dreadful untruth, that *God is a liar.* We may tremble to mention the evil of unbelief. To give the lie is reckoned the greateſt injury among men; for, truth is the ground of commerce, and human ſociety: ſo that to ſay that a man is a liar, is as much as to ſay, he is unworthy, and unfit to keep company with men: And, alas! what an injury is this to God, who ſtands more upon his word than any other part of his name! Pſal. cxxxviii. 2. *He hath magnified his word above all his name:* in ſo much that we have more experience of God, in making good his word, than in any other thing.—By unbelief we deny the *wiſdom* of God, and charge him with folly. *All the treaſures of wiſdom are laid up in Chriſt,* and in the contrivance of

of ſalvation through him: here is the *manifold wiſdom of God;* which the angels admire. Behold, unbelief imputes folly to *the only wiſe God;* and that in the moſt ſignal inſtance of it.—Again, by unbelief you deny the *power* of God, and queſtion his ability: *Can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs?* Pſal. lxxviii. 19, 20. *Can the ſon of Jeſſe give you vineyards?* ſays unbelief. Though he be *able to ſave to the uttermoſt;* unbelief ſuppoſes there is ſomething too hard for God, that he cannot do, and which his power cannot reach.—By unbelief we deny the *love* and *mercy* of God, and charge him with unmercifulneſs, and defect of goodneſs, as if he was an implacable Judge ſtill, and not upon a *throne of grace,* nor a *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf. God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John iii. 16. But unbelief contemns all the diſcoveries that God makes of his love and goodwill to men in Chriſt. God ſays, you need my Son, you are damned if you take him not; and I freely offer him to you that you may be ſaved, and yet we reject this grace.—Yea, by unbelief we ſtrike at the very *being* of God, and make an attempt upon God's life: ſo much *atheiſm* is in unbelief, that, at one ſtroak, we thereby take away the ſcriptures, God and Chriſt, and all the good things that belong to our peace. So much *blaſphemy* is in it, that every unbeliever, by his ſecret and open murmurings againſt God, doth raiſe many black ſcandals upon God. So much *idolatry* is in it, that every unbeliever idolizes himſelf, his own carnal wiſdom, pride, will, common gifts, ſelf-ſufficiency, legal righteouſneſs, and ſeeming good duties, and by ſelf-dependency maketh himſelf his God. Thus doth he deify himſelf and undeify the true God. As faith honours God, ſo doth unbelief diſhonour him. What God doth to the creature, that faith doth to God: God juſtifieth, ſanctifieth, and glorifieth the creature; and ſo faith doth juſtify, ſanctify, and glorify God.—Faith doth *juſtify God,* Luke vii. 29.; acquit him from all the jealouſies that the carnal world, and the carnal heart doth caſt upon him.—Faith doth *ſanctify God,* Num. xx. 12.; by ſetting him above all, and believing

lieving that he can make good his word, when the courſe of all things ſeems to contradict it.—Faith doth *glorify God*, Rom. iv. 20.; declaratively giving him the glory of his excellencies: but unbelief, inſtead of juſtifying, doth accuſe him; inſtead of ſanctifying his name, doth but profane it; inſtead of glorifying, doth diſhonour him. And therefore it is the moſt heinous and hateful ſin.

2. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief will appear, if we conſider it with reſpect to CHRIST. Unbelief reproaches him, betrays him, kills him, and curſes him.—By unbelief, in rejecting Chriſt, you *reproach* him as if he was a deceiver; for, the native language of unbelief is, he is not the Saviour of ſinners; he is but an impoſtor, and ſo we will have nothing to do with him: his words ſeem to you as idle tales, and you believe them not; as if he was like Naphtali, cheating you with goodly words.—By unbelief you *betray* him, ſaying, *Hail, Maſter*, under a pretence of friendſhip. Many eat his bread, wear his livery, call him Maſter, and yet lift up the heel againſt him.—By unbelief you *kill* and *crucify* him afreſh: know it from the Lord, Sirs, they may have a hand in crucifying Chriſt, that never ſaw his face; Heb. vi. 6. *They crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh.*—Yea, by unbelief you *curſe* him, and call him *accurſed*, whom God hath bleſſed; and of whom it is ſaid, that *men ſhall be bleſſed in him, and all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.* It may be you will ignorantly reject this charge and ſay, you never curſed Chriſt, or called him accurſed all your days: but in vain do you excuſe yourſelves, if you be an unbeliever under the goſpel; for, every one that hath heard the goſpel, do, either by faith ſay, that *Jeſus is the Lord*, receiving him as ſuch; or elſe, by unbelief, do practically call him *accurſed*, and reject him as an horrible impoſtor: yea, every unbeliever doth *trample on the blood of the Son of God*, and *count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing*, Heb. v. 29. All unbelief hath ſomething of this in it. The apoſtle ſhews how all that hear of Chriſt, do either by faith crown him, or by unbelief curſe him; *Wherefore I give you to underſtand, that no man ſpeaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jeſus accurſed:*

accurſed: and that no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt, 1 Cor. xii. 3. And, oh! ſhall we reckon it a light matter, thus to tread upon the Son of God, and trample upon God's moſt precious jewel, wherein he is well-pleaſed; and to loath that which God loves above all things? What horrible ingratitude is it to ſlight that remedy, that the infinitely wiſe God hath been, at ſo great pains, and ſo much expences to prepare for us; and hath coſt him more than the creating of ten thouſand world would have done! And that we ſhould ſlight the works, which he prefers to all his other works! How criminal muſt it be to undervalue that, and to prefer the devil and your luſts before it!

3. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief, in not receiving Chriſt, will appear, if we conſider it with reſpect to the SPIRIT; for unbelief bears its curſed oppoſition againſt a whole glorious Trinity: and ſeeing God, in the goſpel, doth ſtrive with people by his Spirit, and the motions thereof; people cannot, by unbelief, reject Chriſt, but they muſt ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, as well as againſt the Father and the Son. Indeed, every ſin is a ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, though every ſin be not that which is called eminently the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; for, there are manifold degrees of ſinning that take place, before it comes to that dreadful and unpardonable ſin. There are five or ſix degrees of unbelief, which all bear a reference to the Spirit of God, and every one of them is worſe than another, and the laſt the moſt terrible.—One degree of unbelief is that whereby the Spirit is ſaid to be *grieved; Grieve not the holy Spirit of God: Forty years long was I grieved with this generation.*—Another degree of unbelief is that whereby the Spirit is ſaid to be *vexed;* Iſa. lxiii. 10. *They vexed his holy Spirit.* Oh! to vex God is a ſad matter.—A third degree of unbelief is that whereby the Spirit is ſaid to be *quenched; Quench not the Spirit,* 1 Theſſ. v. 19. We are apt to put out the fire that God would kindle within us.—A fourth degree of unbelief is that whereby the Spirit of God is ſaid to be *reſiſted; Do ye always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt?* ſaid Stephen to his unbelieving hearers, Acts vii. 5.—The fifth degree is that whereby the Spirit is reckoned

reckoned to be *deſpiſed;* and when it comes to this, people are nigh unto curſing: *Behold ye deſpiſers, wonder and periſh.*—But then the ſixth and laſt, and truly ſaddeſt degree of all is, when unbelief comes to that pitch, whereby the Spirit is ſaid to be *deſpited*, Heb. x. 29. The man is filled with horrible malice, and *hath done deſpite unto the Spirit of grace;* and this is an expreſſion uſually taken to ſignify the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.—There is a black and dark ſtair, with ſix ſteps; and as we would not chuſe to go down to the loweſt ſtep, let us beware of the firſt: unbelief hath ſome ingredients of all theſe in it. And, oh! what ſinfulneſs may we ſee from hence to be in it!

4. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief, will appear, if we conſider it with reſpect to the GOSPEL, wherein Chriſt is offered to be received. Unbelief doth juſt fruſtrate the deſign and make void the importance of the goſpel to man; for, *he receiveth the grace of God in vain,* 2 Cor. vi. 1. As good, yea, better had it been for ſuch a man, that Chriſt had never come into the world; or that he had never heard of him.—By unbelief we fruſtrate Chriſt's glorious expedition from heaven to earth; and, in a manner, give him cauſe to repent of his death and bloody agony. You ſay, in effect, Chriſt might have remained in heaven, kept his blood in his veins, and that he died as a fool; and you give him no thanks for his pains. Alas! ſad is the language of unbelief!—By unbelief you declare a goſpel miniſtry uſeleſs; you, in effect, not only call miniſters *fools*, that preach the goſpel, but the goſpel itſelf *fooliſhneſs; The preaching of the croſs is, to them that periſh, fooliſhneſs: We preach Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs.*

5. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief, in rejecting of Chriſt, will appear, if we conſider it in the EFFECTS of it, with reſpect to other SINS: As it is the mother of all ſin; ſo it is the mother of all miſery. Many are aſhamed of the daughter, but not of the mother: they are aſhamed of theft, murder, and adultery; but not of unbelief, which is the mother of all theſe. The firſt ſin was the fruit of unbelief, which opened the door to all ſin and

miſery: for, had not Adam diſbelieved the word of God, he had not believed Satan, nor eaten the forbidden fruit: and ſtill it is the prodigious womb of all theſe.—It is the mother of *hardneſs* and *ſtupidity* of heart; *He upbraided them for their unbelief and hardneſs of heart, becauſe they believed not*, Mark xvi. 14.—It is the mother of *apoſtacy;* it is big with child of defection from God; *Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God*, Heb. iii. 12. Unbelief travails as in birth till that accurſed child of apoſtacy be brought forth. Why, thro' unbelief, the man loſes the thought of the excellency of Chriſt, and increaſeth in thought of love to his idols: for, as love to Chriſt doth decreaſe, love to idols will increaſe. And again, as he that believeth not the threatening, will not ſtand to do any evil: ſo he that doth not believe the promiſe, will not be forward to do any good; hence unbelief makes apoſtacy.—Unbelief is the mother of *lukewarmneſs:* All our neglect and coldneſs in holy duties, comes from the weakneſs of faith or the power of unbelief; there is a decay at the root. Faith makes a man earneſt and zealous; but unbelief makes him coldrife and careleſs. Unbelief doth even turn duties into ſin, and pollutes every duty, every action: *To them that are unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conſcience is defiled*, Titus i. 15. *The plowing of the wicked is ſin:* yea, the *prayer of the wicked is abominable to God;* for, *whatſoever is not of faith is ſin.* And as it turns duties into ſin and pollutes them; ſo it ſtops the *mortification* of all ſin: it is impoſſible for one, in the exerciſe of unbelief, to mortify a luſt or idol. You may allude to, Matth. xvii. 20. when the diſciples aſked this queſtion, *Why could we not caſt out this devil?* Chriſt anſwers, *Becauſe of your unbelief.* So, why cannot you caſt out that devil, that luſt, that idol? It is *becauſe of your unbelief.*—Unbelief is the mother of *inſtability.* Faith is a fixing grace; *My heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord:* but it is through unbelief that the man is *toſſed to and fro; If ye will not believe, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed*, Iſa. vii. 9.——Thus it is the ſin of all ſins, the prolific womb of every other ſin.

6. The

6. The ſinfulneſs of unbelief, in rejecting Chriſt, will appear, if we conſider it more cloſely with reſpect to ITSELF. It is the greateſt act of folly to reject and not to receive Chriſt; *They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wiſdom is in them?* Jer. viii. 9. Though ye were the greateſt heads of wit in the whole world, while ye reject Chriſt, ye are but arrant fools; ye can never be *wiſe unto ſalvation* while this is your caſe.—What a greater folly than to refuſe a remedy, when it is in our offer? For an wounded man to ſlight a phyſician, or a condemned man to ſlight a pardon, is an argument he is not in his right wits. He is as guilty of ſelf-murder, who rejects a proper medicine, againſt preſent death, as he that cuts his throat: and ſo is the caſe here. Nothing can be more fooliſh and unreaſonable than to reject Chriſt: for, as he hath the only right to your ſouls; ſo he out-bids all other merchants; he out-bids ſin, Satan, and the world. Can theſe give you more than Chriſt? Can the world give you more? Let them all declare their ſtrength and treaſure. Can any of them give redemption to you? Can any of them procure remiſſion of ſin to you? Can any of them ſatisfy God's wrath for you? Can any of them preſent you righteous before the judgment-ſeat, or ſettle eternal life upon you? All this Chriſt can do, and none elſe. How unreaſonable is it then to reject him, and chooſe any thing elſe beſide him? But the grievouſneſs of this ſin, and its aggravations, may appear, in conſidering further the folly of it, as it is a ſlighting the remedy, when you view what for a remdy you ſlight by unbelief. Why,

Your unbelief, in refuſing Chriſt, is a ſlighting of a *needful* remedy. O Sirs! you have extreme need of Chriſt. Doth not a ſinner need a Saviour? Were you in a ſtate of innocency, as at the firſt creation, then there would be no need: but you are fallen, and broken, and ſold under ſin. Had you a ſtock in your own hand, to ſet up your broken ſouls again; and to purchaſe peace and ſalvation, there would be leſs need: but you are *by nature without ſtrength.* Could any plank bring you aſhore but Chriſt, then there were the leſs hazard: but, oh! Sirs, there is ſalvation in no other. It is not need-

ful that you come to Chriſt with your burden? for, otherwiſe the whole burden of ſin and guilt lieth upon your back: a burden that will ſicken you to the loweſt hell. Your ſoul is naked, and ſwarms with the vermin of filthy luſts: Do you not need a garment to cover you, and a fountain to waſh you? Your ſoul is enſlaved to enemies and idols: Do you not need a Redeemer to looſe your fetters? You are under the wrath of God: and do you not need a Reconciler? *God is angry with the wicked every day;* every day of the week, and every hour of the day: when you go out, or come in; when you riſe up, or ly down, God is ſtill angry with you. While in a ſtate of unbelief, the flaming ſword of juſtice is over your neck; and who can help you, if Chriſt be neglected? If you remain Chriſtleſs now, ſurely you will be ſpeechleſs at the great day, when the wicked ſhall have none to pity them; for the Judge will frown upon them; their own conſcience will upbraid them; the ſaints will condemn them; their friends will forſake them; the angels will deride them; the devil will ſcoff at them; the heavens will thunder againſt them; earth will flame about them; hell will groan for them; and down they will go, roaring and howling for ever! Why, man; there is no remedy but one, and is not that a needful remedy? yet, by unbelief, you reject it.—— Your unbelief is ſlighting of a *ſuitable* remedy, a remedy fitted to your need: look upon your need aright, and then judge who but Chriſt is fitted for a ſinner. Are you a blinded ſinner? Here is a Prophet to enlighten you: Are you a guilty ſinner? Here is a Prieſt to ſatisfy for you. Are you an enſlaved ſinner? Here is a King to proclaim liberty. He is well furniſhed and qualified for your caſe: he hath gold, for your poverty; balm, for your wounds; a fountain, for your filth; a ranſom, for your debt; yea, here is a broad plaiſter, for your broad ſore; a deep fountain, for your deep guilt; a great ranſom, for your great bondage; the chief of Saviours, for the chief of ſinners. And, O what think you of unbelief, that rejects all this?—Your unbelief is a ſlignting of a *gracious* and *merciful* remedy: Ah! how would fallen angels value ſuch a mercy! You ſlight your own

own mercy, through unbelief, in rejecting of Chriſt: *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son:* and *Chriſt ſo loved the world, that he gave himſelf.* Is not Chriſt ſaying in the goſpel, *Behold me, behold me?* Is he not ſtretching forth his merciful arms? and ſhall not divine love melt, or move you? Why, ſays Chriſt, ſhall I vail my glory, die a curſed ſhameful death, and bear the ſcorn of men, the wrath of God, the curſe of the law, the terror of death, and the pains of hell for you, and yet you care not a ſtraw for me?—Your unbelief is a ſlighting of a *near* remedy; Rom. x. 6, 7, 8, 9. The remedy is brought to your very door: you need not ſay, *Who will aſcend into heaven, to bring Chriſt down? or, who ſhall deſcend into the deep, to bring Chriſt again from the dead?—The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* You need not ſay, *Who will roll away the ſtone from the mouth of the well?* for, Chriſt hath done it for you; and now it is an open fountain, and running by your door. Well, Sirs, will it not be ſad to have Chriſt ſo near, his righteouſneſs near, and yet eternally to miſs him! To periſh, like the thief upon the croſs, with a Saviour at your ſide! To be within a ſtep of him, and yet never touch him! Yea, ſuch is the nature of your unbelief, to ſuffer you to ſtarve for want, beſide infinite fulneſs at your hand in the goſpel-offer. —Your unbelief is a ſlighting of an *eaſy* remedy; for the goſpel lays no obſtruction in your way of cloſing with Chriſt, and receiving of him: there is no impediment but your want of will, which you lay in your own way; *You will not come to me, that you might have life.* The gates of the goſpel are caſt open to all paſſengers; and whoſoever will are commanded to enter. Chriſt is the door, and the door is open, and you may come in; yea, if you look but in, you are ſaved: *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth,* Iſa. xlv. 22. Faith is indeed the effect of the almighty power of God; but your powerleſneſs lies in your unwillingneſs: the goſpel-offer lays no obſtruction in your way; and there is no hinderance on God's part. In this reſpect it is an eaſy remedy; but unbelief ſlights it, notwithſtanding that the Lord ſays, *Whoſoever will, let him come:* and, *him*

that

that cometh, I will in no wiſe caſt out.—Your unbelief is a ſlighting of a *ſeaſonable* remedy, a *timely* remedy; and now is the time, now is the ſeaſon: *Now is the appointed time, now is the day of ſalvation.* You know not but your days may be at a cloſe, ſo as Chriſt ſhall never be offered to you again: you know not but this is the laſt ſermon, or the laſt Sabbath-day; and yet ſuch is the nature of your unbelief, that it neglects the opportunity, which it may never enjoy again.—In a word, this remedy is *preſſed* upon you; Chriſt is in earneſt offering himſelf; *Wiſdom cries in the ſtreets:* and what is his cry? See Iſa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.* You will notice three times COME in that one verſe: he is crying, *Come, come, come.* O! is he not purſuing you with his gracious offers, even when you are running away from him? As the rock followed the Iſraelites in the wilderneſs, with its running ſtreams of water; ſo Chriſt, the ſpiritual Rock, is following you with the ſtreams of his mercy and blood, to waſh and ſave you. O how compaſſionately doth he complain of ſinners! *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,* John v. 40. As if he ſhould ſay: Why run ye ſo faſt away from me? Why will ye not come to me, that am come from heaven to ſave you? It is not an enemy but a friend, that you run from. Oh! what madneſs are you guilty of? Yea, you are buſy going to the devil to get death and eternal damnation: but ye will not come to me to get life and eternal ſalvation. Alas! Sirs, what horrid and unſpeakable evil is there in unbelief!—— Thus you ſee the *ſinfulneſs* of unbelief. I ſhould next ſpeak of the *hurtfulneſs* thereof.

(2.) The *hurtfulneſs* of unbelief is another part of the *malignity* of it; and this will appear in theſe particulars following.

1. It is moſt *diſpleaſing* to God, and ſo cannot but be moſt hurtful: as it doth moſt diſhonour God, ſo it doth moſt diſpleaſe him. Chriſt did never chide his diſciples ſo much for any thing, as for their unbelief; *O ye fools, and ſlow of heart to believe; why do ye doubt? O*

ye

ye of little faith! When they were afraid of periſhing in the ſtorm, he chides them before he chideth the wind; the ſtorm firſt began in their own heart. Iſrael were *caſt off for their unbelief*, Rom. xi. 20. If we would know what company are in hell, ſee Rev. xxi. 8. it begins with the *fearful* and *unbelieving*.

2. Unbelief is hurtful, in regard that final unbelief is an undoubted evidence of *reprobation; Ye believe not, becauſe ye are none of my ſheep*, John x. 26. Unbelief is God's priſon wherein he keeps the reprobate world; *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief*, Rom. xi. 21. He hath ſhut them up under unbelief; *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed: The elect ſhall obtain*, and others are hardened. Why then, by unbelief you put a ſeal to your own reprobation, and continue a black note upon yourſelves. While you ſlight Chriſt you increaſe your immortal bonds, and are twiſting a cord wherewith to bind your ſouls eternally, in theſe unquenchable flames: therefore, *Be not mockers, leſt your bands be made ſtrong*, Iſa. xxviii. 22. There is no back-door to eſcape God's wrath, if Chriſt be not received.

3. It is hurtful in that it *hinders the tokens of God's love*, and *deprives us of much good*. Nothing doth bar, and ſhut out God's operation, in order to our relief, ſo much as this ſin; *He could not do many mighty works there, becauſe of their unbelief*, Mat. xiii. 58. It is true, he could by his power deſtroy unbelief; but while unbelief remained, his hands were, as it were, bound; *Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God*, John ii. 40. It mars the comfort of ordinances; *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it*, Heb. iv. 2. It bars the gates of heaven: it excluded Adam out of paradiſe, the Iſraelites out of Canaan, and will exclude us out of heaven, if it be not removed, Heb. iii. 17, 18.

4. It is therefore alſo hurtful, in that it is the *great murderer of ſouls: If ye believe not, ye ſhall die in your ſins*. The ruin of ſinners is laid at the door of this ſin, as if there were none other, and juſtly ſo: for, if the malefactor was offered life, upon his accepting the king's remiſſion; if he refuſed this, it might well be ſaid,

ſaid, his refuſal hanged him: even ſo here, *he that believeth not is condemned.* Indeed no other ſin would condemn you, if you were not guilty of this ſin: but this is the ſin, that binds the guilt of all others ſins hard and faſt upon you; becauſe by unbelief, you reject the ſatisfaction for all ſin, by refuſing Chriſt; and this will aggrave your perdition to the higheſt degree.——But having enlarged ſo much upon the *ſinfulneſs* of it, the *hurtfulneſs* plainly follows thence.

SERMON XLIII.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The tenth Sermon on this text.]

IT was a heavy challenge the Lord Jeſus gave to the Jews, John v. 43. *I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not.* He had challenged them for injuring themſelves, ver. 40. ſaying, *And ye will not come unto me, that you may have life:* and again, ver. 42. for their diſeſteem of God, ſaying, *But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you;* and now here, in this verſe, for their not *embracing Chriſt, though come in his Father's name.* Where we ſee, that, though Chriſt be *God over all, equal with the Father;* and *Lord over his own houſe,* and ſo acts in his own name; yet he condeſcends, as Mediator, to come into the world clothed with a commiſſion and authority from the Father, to make offer of himſelf, and life through him, Phil. ii. 5, —11. Mat. xiii. 17. Heb. v. 4, 5. Obſerve alſo, Chriſt, though thus coming, is to be received, embraced, and entertained; yet ſuch is the perverſeneſs of the world, as not to make him welcome. When Chriſt manifeſts himſelf to the world, it is uſual with Satan to hound out ſeducers,

ſeducers, and falſe teachers, to ſtudy to bear him down, and make the way of truth odious. See Mat. xxiv. 5. 24. Acts v. 36, 37. John viii. 37. But the true diſciple of Chriſt diſcovers himſelf at all times, by his firm attachment to his Maſter; and therefore is characterized by our Lord himſelf, as one that not only gives entertainment to the Father, but to the Son; *He that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me*, Mat. x. 40. Though ſeducers may pretend to come in Chriſt's name, Mat. xxiv. 5.; yet they come but in their own name, having no commiſſion from the Lord; making themſelves, and their reputation an advantage, their chief aim in their undertakings, and ſpeakings, and imaginations of their own heart and brain, without any warrant from God. Such as will not receive and embrace Chriſt, will eaſily receive and embrace ſeducers.

We now come to the laſt conſideration to engage you to receive Chriſt.

[6.] The *ſixth* motive is, to conſider the *excellency* and *neceſſity* of *faith*, in receiving Chriſt. Faith is as helpful and advantageous, as unbelief is hurtful and diſadvantageous.

All that I ſhall point at, concerning the *excellency of faith*, upon this head, ſhall be to diſcover theſe ſix advantages thereof, beſide what I have ſaid before: For, I have told you what it is we receive, when we receive Chriſt *, which diſcovers the unſpeakable advantage thereof. But beſides what was then offered, let us view it.

1. With reſpect to *Chriſt*, and then the firſt excellency of faith in receiving Chriſt is, that it *advances Chriſt's name*, and makes him very precious, and very glorious in the man's eyes: *To you that believe he is precious*; yea, *more glorious than mountains of prey*. And herein faith goes beyond ſenſe, or ſpiritual ſenſation; for ſenſe may take up the glory of his actings; but faith ſees the glory of his perſon.—Senſe beholds the love that is in his ſmiles; but faith beholds the love that is in his heart, even when ſmiles are out of view.—Senſe looks to what

* What theſe things are, may be ſeen, p. 105, 106, 173,—176.

Chriſt is for the preſent; but faith will look to what he hath been from eternity, before time; and what he will be to eternity, after time: and faith's long journey, from eternity to eternity, makes it fall into an ocean of admiration, and raiſes the thoughts to a higher pitch of eſtimation of Chriſt.—Senſe, in a word, will follow Chriſt for his love, and for the loaves; but faith prizes him for himſelf. And ſurely this is the exerciſe of the higher houſe, to be dwelling upon the contemplation of Chriſt's beauty, and to be tranſported with love to him, and joy in him.—By faith we view the matchleſs excellency, and the tranſcendent properties of Chriſt. Faith makes long commentaries and precious encomiums upon Chriſt: "It is the faithful ſpy, as one calls it, that "brings the good report of glorious Chriſt." Chriſt's and his Father's honour are both advanced at once by faith, when we receive Chriſt.

2. The ſecond excellency in faith, is with reſpect to the *believer*, in that it advances the believer to the *higheſt dignity*, ſuch as, the dignity to be a *member* of Chriſt; for, by faith, Chriſt and the believer are ſo unite, that they are no more two, but *one ſpirit; He that is joined to the Lord is one ſpirit.* And herein faith keeps a ſweet correſpondency with her ſiſter love; for faith is that nail which faſtens the ſoul to Chriſt; and love is that grace that drives the nail to the head. Faith takes hold of him, and love helps to keep the grip. Chriſt dwells in the heart by faith, and he burns in the heart by love, like a fire melting the breaſt. Faith caſts the knot, and love draws it faſt.—The dignity of being *God's children; We are the children of God by faith:* and *to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe in his name,* John i. 12. And is this a ſmall thing to be a ſon to the King of kings; or to enjoy the privileges of his children; *the ſon abideth in the houſe for ever;* to be *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt?* O if we knew the excellency of this dignity, it would ſtir us up to more concern after this grace of faith!—The dignity of *power* with God, like Jacob; for, he hath ſaid, *Whatſoever ye aſk in prayer, believing, ye ſhall receive it,* Mat. xxi. 22. And, indeed, if

if ye receive Chriſt, ye ſhall receive whatſoever ye aſk of God. It is ſtrange to ſee his condeſcenſion, in that he puts a blank in the poor believer's hand many times, ſaying, *What wilt thou that I ſhould do unto thee?*

3. The third excellency in faith, is with reſpect to other *graces*, in that it advances all other graces: faith doth quicken every other grace.—It advances *love;* and hence faith and love are put together in ſcripture ſo frequently: for, no ſooner doth faith look to the glorious object, than love delights in it; faith draws aſide the vail, and love ſits down and ſolaces itſelf in the diſcovery.—Faith advances *mortification;* for, by this ſhield of faith, we *quench the fiery darts of the wicked: And this is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith.* Faith makes the ſoul to eſteem his idols to be as taſteleſs as the white of an egg: and that which formerly was ſweet proviſion for their luſts, doth now become ſorrowful meat, and bitter herbs.—Hence faith advanceth *humility.* By *what law is boaſting excluded?* It is not *by the law of works,* but by *the law of faith:* yea, faith ſees ſuch glory in Chriſt, as makes the man vile in his own eyes.—Faith advances *joy;* for, *the God of peace doth fill with joy and peace in believing: in whom beliving we rejoice.* The more faith the more joy.—And further, faith advances the grace of *hope.* We cannot hope for the thing promiſed, unleſs by faith we cloſe with the promiſe itſelf; for faith lays hold on the promiſe, and hope to the thing promiſed.— In a word, all the graces of the Spirit are quickened and advanced by this grace of faith; as, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, and temperance.

4. The fourth excellency in faith, is with reſpect to *duty*, in that it advances duties as well as graces: I inſtance in prayer and obedience.—It advances and excites to the duty of *prayer:* a believing perſon is a praying perſon; *Lord, I believe*, ſaid the man, Mark ix. 24.; there is the confeſſion and profeſſion of his faith: *Lord, help my unbelief;* there immediately follows his prayer. Faith excites to the greateſt diligence in attending upon the Lord in this duty. Little faith makes little prayer; little ſweet diverſion from ſleep, in this ſpiritual

exerciſe.—Faith advances *obedience:* it makes obedience eaſy and pleaſant; Heb. ix. 8. *By faith Abraham, when called to go out to a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, obeyed.* Why are God's commands a burden? Even want of faith is the reaſon: a pleaſant obedience is impoſſible without faith. Faith diſcovers the invaluable excellencies that are in Chriſt, and this makes the perſon look upon his duty, more as his dignity than his duty. Faith takes hold of that infinite ſtrength that is in Chriſt, and draws virtue from him; and this makes him obey. No holineſs without faith. It facilitates every duty, and makes it ſweet; but unbelief makes every duty a burden.

5. The fifth excellency in faith, is with reſpect to *acceptance* of every duty and action: neither our prayers nor ſervices are acceptable but in faith; *By faith Abel offered up a more acceptable ſacrifice than Cain*, Heb. xi. 4.; intimating, that without faith, no acceptable ſacrifice. And ver. 6. *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God;* intimating, that by faith we do exceedingly pleaſe him. Many prayers are nothing elſe but a breach of the third command, in *taking the name of God in vain;* for which *the Lord will not hold them guiltleſs.* The duties of the moſt part are nothing but abomination; becauſe, to the *unbelieving and impure, nothing is clean*, Tit. i. 15.

6. The ſixth excellency in faith, is in reſpect of *communion with God.* Faith is that grace whereby a believer doth attain the moſt *intimate* communion with God, and correſpondence with heaven; for, *Chriſt dwells in the heart by faith*, Eph. iii. 17. By the exerciſe of other graces, Chriſt is as a paſſenger that tarries at moſt for a night: but, by the exerciſe of faith, he is as an inhabitant, that comes and takes up houſe with us. The acts of faith are like the ſteps of a ladder, by which we go up to heaven, and converſe with the higher houſe; it uſhers the believer to the throne.—Faith is the grace whereby the believer attains the moſt *ſenſible enjoyments;* for, it keeps the eye upon the moſt glorious object: and ſeeing it is a ſenſible act, and faith is a *ſeeing of him who is inviſible*, Heb. xi. 27.; perhaps ſome may be ſaying, Whence ſo little ſeeing of the Lord? Alas! it is more

than

than *thirty days* ſince I ſaw the King: yea, ſome may be at that; I have lived theſe *two years* at Jeruſalem, and yet have not ſeen the King's face: yea, the complaint of ſome may go higher; theſe *three years and ſix months*, it hath not rained upon me, but the clouds have been reſtrained and bound up, and the heaven hath become braſs; and why? it is the want of the exerciſe of faith: many are leſs convinced of the neglect of the duty of faith, than of the neglect of the duty of prayer: but if we knew the excellency of this grace, we would have a holy impatience till we believed.—It is by faith the man hath a *clear ſight* of the things promiſed; the great things in the promiſe, as well as the promiſe itſelf: by faith a man is brought within ſight of God, and within ſight of heaven; *Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. So by *faith Moſes ſaw him who is inviſible*, ver. 27. Why, is it poſſible to ſee things that cannot be ſeen? yea, faith's diſcoveries of God are as certain as the diſcoveries of our bodily eyes are: and, by this means, it comes to have ſuch communion with God; for it is moſt myſterious and ſublime in its actings; and therefore called the *myſtery of faith*.—Hence faith can believe the word of promiſe, though ſenſe ſeems to contradict the accompliſhment thereof; for, it walks not upon the low ground of ſenſe and reaſon, but upon the high road of the *ſure word of prophecy*, and the divine faithfulneſs is engaged in the promiſe; as we ſee in Abraham's faith, Rom. iv. 19. Thus faith believed the falling down of the walls of Jericho, by the blowing of rams horns, which was impoſſible to ſenſe and reaſon.—Faith can believe the promiſe, though the *providence* of God ſeems to contradict the accompliſhment; ſaying with Job, *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him.* Notwithſtanding of killing diſpenſations, yet he would believe the Lord's word.—Faith can believe a word of promiſe even when the *commands* of God ſeem to contradict the accompliſhment: thus when Abraham was commanded to ſacrifice his ſon, the promiſed ſeed, yet he believed the promiſe would be accompliſhed: "He "had natural affection to wreſtle with, and the com-"mand of God ſeeming to contradict the promiſe of "God;

" God; yet, over the belly of all theſe, as one ſaith, " believing Abraham gives faith to the promiſe, and " brings Iſaac to the altar," Heb. xi. 17, 18. 19.— Faith can believe a promiſe, though *challenges* for ſin and *conviction* of guilt do ſeem to oppoſe and contradict the accompliſhment of the promiſe; 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *Though my houſe be not ſo with God*, yet he believed the promiſe, ſaying, *he hath made with me an everlaſting covenant, ordered in all things and ſure.* Thus again, Pſal. lxv. 3. *Iniquities prevail againſt me;* yet this doth not interrupt his faith; *as for our tranſgreſſions, thou ſhalt purge them away:* And ſurely it is a noble act of faith to believe, notwithſtanding of unanſwerable challenges of guilt. The beſt way, both to crucify idols, and to anſwer challenges, is by receiving Chriſt, and hoping againſt hope. Now, the faith of a promiſe being the great medium, the grand mean of communion with God, and intercourſe with heaven, we may ſee how it advances communion with God.—Yea, faith can believe a promiſe, though temptations, falls, and follies ſeem to contradict the accompliſhment. Satan aims at nothing more, than to oppoſe and weaken faith; but God turns his temptations, and their falls, to the further eſtabliſhment of faith, which, like a tree, ſtands the ſtronger of its being ſhaken. True faith gets ſtrength by every fall to the ground, it riſes and fights more valiantly; as we ſee in Peter, and other ſcripture examples. Temptation to faith is as fire to gold, 1 Pet. i. 7. It makes the true gold more pure; and inſtead of deſtroying faith, it is the occaſion of refining it, and adding to its ſtrength. ——I might enlarge this purpoſe, concerning the excellency of faith, to a great degree; from the conſideration of the worthy Prince that faith receives, *Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* and the *walk* that iſſues from thence, and ends in glory.

3*dly*, The third thing here propoſed, in this exhortation to receive Chriſt, was to give ſome *directions*, in order to the receiving of Chriſt: And the directions I would offer may be confined to theſe four. 1. Study the *ſad ſtate* you are in while without Chriſt, and faith in him. 2. Study the *right uſe* of the means of faith.

3. Study

3. Study to have the *obſtructions* and *impediments* of faith removed. 4. Study the art of *pleading with God*, for this grace to receive Chriſt.

[1.] Study the *ſad ſtate* you are in, while without Chriſt, and without faith to receive him. While you are deſtitute of faith you are deſtitute of Chriſt; yea, you are yet in nature, and have neither part nor portion in him: and therefore, O man, be deeply impreſſed with the ſad caſe and ſtate you are in, upon this account; for, you will never ſeek after Chriſt, nor faith in him, till you ſee your need of him, by getting your natural ſtate diſcovered to you. Though this be not the formal cauſe of faith, yet it is a forcible mean to engage the ſoul to be reſtleſs, till it get faith in Chriſt; therefore the law is ſaid to be *our ſchoolmaſter, to lead us unto Chriſt.* Study therefore, I ſay, the ſadneſs of a Chriſtleſs ſtate. Why?

1. A Chriſtleſs ſtate is a *burdened* ſtate: you lie under the burden of all your ſins, original and actual: the burden of the guilt of all your ſinful thoughts, words, and actions lies upon your back; becauſe you never come to Chriſt with your burdens: and if you never come, the burden will ſink you down to the loweſt hell.

2. The Chriſtleſs ſtate that you are in is a *loathſom* ſtate. All your actions, whether natural, civil, or religious, are vile and abominable in the ſight of God: the very *prayer of the wicked is ſin.* You are full of nothing but *putrifying ſores, from the crown of your head to the ſole of your foot.* There is no mire ſo unclean, no vomit ſo loathſom, no peſtilence ſo noiſom, no carrion ſo offenſive, as thou art in thy Chriſtleſs ſtate, in the ſight of a holy God, who cannot *look upon iniquity but with abhorrence.*

3. Thy Chriſtleſs ſtate is a *poor*, *blind*, and *naked* ſtate. Your ſoul is naked, and you ſwarm with the vermin of filthy luſts: you are deſtitute of a garment, to cover you; of eye-ſalve, to enlighten you; and of gold, to enrich you; there ſeems to be an alluſion to Chriſt's threefold office, Rev. iii. 18. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment,*

raiment, that thou mayeſt be clothed, and that the ſhame of thy nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee. As a Prophet, he hath eye-ſalve; as a Prieſt, he hath a garment; and as a King, he hath gold: but now, you are deſtitute of all theſe, while you are without Chriſt, and without faith in him.

4. Your Chriſtleſs ſtate is an *enſlaved* ſtate. You are a ſlave to Satan; he works in your heart, as in a ſhop, Eph. ii. 2. He ſays to you, *Go, and you go; do this, and ye do it.* Your ſtate is worſe than the Egyptian bondage; for, *Iſrael groaned under theirs;* but, alas! you are not ſenſible of yours; neither do ye believe it: the devil knows, that if you perceived your ſlavery, you would ſeek to make your eſcape from him; therefore he makes all ſure. He does with you as the Philiſtines did with Sampſon; puts out your eyes that you may not ſee your chains, nor look to Chriſt for liberty.

5. Your Chriſtleſs ſtate is therefore a *wrathful* ſtate, wherein God's wrath is burning againſt you; the flaming ſword of juſtice is always over your neck; for, *God is angry with the wicked every day,* Pſal. vii. 11. Every day of the week, and every hour of the day; when you go out, and when you come in; when you riſe up, and ly down; God is ſtill angry with you: he hath bent his bow, and made ready his arrows: and you are the butt of theſe arrows of his indignation: and if he let them fly, they will pierce you to the very ſoul; and who will heal that wound? Who can help you if Chriſt neglect you? No reconciliation but through him.

6. Your Chriſtleſs ſtate is a *curſed* ſtate. All the curſes of the broken law are levelled againſt you, and a juſt God is engaged, by his oath, to ruin you: to whom doth he *ſwear in his wrath that they ſhould not enter into his reſt, but to them that believe not?* Heb. iii. 18. Should not the thoughts of this make you tremble? Were it but the oath of a man, or a company of men, as theſe forty men, that bound themſelves with an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul, it would bereave you of your night's reſt and quiet, till you were made friends with your enemies: And will

will the oath of the great God have no effect upon you, nor move you to fly to Chriſt for protection?

Study this ſad ſtate you are in; for withal, it is a *weak* ſtate; ſince, by nature, you are *without ſtrength*, and cannot help yourſelves. You can by no means redeem your own ſoul, or pay your own ranſom. Therefore,

[2.] Study the *right uſe* of the means of faith. Now, when we ſpeak of means, you would know, that faith is not a flower that grows in nature's garden; *By grace ye are ſaved, through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God.* Yea, though a natural man could gather together all the motives and arguments of the Bible, yet he could not make his own heart to believe, or receive Chriſt: God is the giver, Chriſt is the author, and the Holy Ghoſt is the efficient cauſe of faith; yet notwithſtanding there are means which the Lord uſes to bleſs, for working faith. And in general, the great mean and miniſterial inſtrument is the goſpel, which diſcovers a ſhore for a ſhipwrecked ſoul; and it is the *power of God to ſalvation.*

More particularly, the ordinary means are eſpecially theſe ſix, in ſo many words. 1. Mean is *reading* of the ſcriptures; *theſe are they that teſtify of Chriſt*, the great object of faith. 2. *Hearing* of the word preached; for, *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God:* 3. *Meditation:* for if a man never think upon his way, nor conſider matters, he will neither know God, nor believe in him; *The ox knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſter's crib; but Iſrael doth not know, my people doth not conſider.* Meditate on Chriſt's fulneſs, your own wants, the ſuitableneſs of the promiſes, and the freedom of grace. 4. *Prayer;* waiting at Wiſdom's gates, and crying for Wiſdom to *put forth her voice*, to *give underſtanding*, to *ſpeak of excellent things;* and that the *opening of her lips may be*, that her *mouth may ſpeak of truth and righteouſneſs.* 5. *Converſation* with the godly; for, *He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall be wiſe.* 6. *Self-examination; Examine yourſelves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownſelves; know ye not your ownſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Ma-

ny never believe, becauſe they never examine, nor put the queſtion, whether they have believed or not.—— Theſe are ſome of the means. Now, I ſay, ſtudy the *right uſe* of the means of faith.

QUEST. *What is the right uſe theſe means?* Indeed no unbeliever can rightly uſe theſe means: but you are to ſtudy to uſe them as rightly as poſſible; and to uſe them right, is to uſe them,

1. *Humbly*, knowing that means will not do without the Lord's bleſſing upon the means. Never think that God is obliged to give you faith, upon the account of your uſing the means; but uſe them, becauſe he enjoins them as means: put them in their own place, not in Chriſt's room; and do, as the mariner; he cannot command the wind, yet he lies ready at the coaſt, and waits on the wind; and when the gale comes, he hoiſts up the ſails; ſo, though you cannot command the wind of the Spirit, which *blows where it liſts;* yet, wait humbly upon his blowing, and till he *come and move the waters.*

2. *Hopefully* and *believing; It is good for a man both to hope, and quietly to wait for the ſalvation of God,* Lam. iii. 26. If God looks upon no motive in us to induce him to give us Chriſt; who then may not hope and expect againſt hope, and believe againſt unbelief? People, in uſing the means, ſhould do it as believingly as they can, by trying what the Spirit of faith will help them to, preſſing after faith, with an eye to the promiſed ſtrength: and ſo ſtudy to mix faith with the uſe of the word; for, *the word preached did not profit, not being mixed with faith in them who heard it.* And the word read doth not profit, not being mixed with faith in them that read; neither do we receive any thing by prayer, but by believing. Therefore, cry for the ſpirit of faith to accompany the means.

3. Means are to be uſed *frequently:* be often about the Lord's hand, in the uſe of the means; *Bleſſed is he that ſoweth beſide all waters.* We have a common proverb, *A going foot is always getting:* If you be much about God's hand, there will be ſome off-fallings now and

and then to be got. How frequent and induſtrious was Elijah in the uſe of the means! He went up to mount Carmel, and their fell on his face and prayed for rain; but not a cloud appears: he ſent his ſervant to go up and look toward the ſea, to know if there was any appearance of rain; he, on returning, tells there is nothing: he doth not leave praying; he prays again, and ſends his ſervant again, even to ſeven times, 1 Kings xviii. 42, 43. Thus uſe the means frequently and induſtriouſly. And ſo,

4. Uſe them *fervently: Be fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord;* be earneſt in this matter, as a matter of eternal life and death; ſeeking the ſpirit of faith as what you cannot want; *Aſk, and it will be given; ſeek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you,* Luke xi. 9. Why, all theſe words, *aſk, ſeek, knock,* intimate fervency, as well as frequency, in the uſe of means: and what are we thus fervently to ſeek? even *the Spirit,* ver. 13.

5. *Patiently; Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord: behold, the huſbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain,* James v. 7. *Wait patiently for him,* Pſal. xxxvii. 7. *The Lord is a God of judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him,* Iſa. xxx. 18. The word may ſeem ſtrange; for there is encouragement in waiting on a God of mercy, but what comfort in waiting upon a God of judgment; but *judgment* in this place is not to be underſtood as oppoſed to mercy, but to folly: he is a God of judgment; that is, of infinite wiſdom, who knows how to time and order his gifts.

6. Uſe means *perſeveringly;* Hoſ. xii. 6. *Wait on thy God continually,* till he come in with regenerating grace: do not *limit the holy One of Iſrael:* it is reaſonable to wait God's leiſure, for he gives grace freely and ſovereignly: and if grace come in the end, what though we have waited long for it?—Uſe the means *honeſtly,* and *do not weary in well-doing; for, in due time, ye ſhall reap, if ye faint not.* Give not over the uſe of means, but wait on him who *waits to be gracious.* We never heard of any that got this diſpoſition, but they found their wait-

ing on the Lord was not in vain; the Lord pitied them, and gave them a heart to believe and receive Chriſt.—— This is the direction I offer then; ſtudy the right uſe of the means of faith.

[3.] Study to get removed from you all the *obſtructions* and *impediments* of faith and receiving of Chriſt: and the impediments are theſe ſix.

1. One impediment of faith, that hinders the receiving of him, is *natural atheiſm: The fool hath ſaid in his heart, There is no God.* And an atheiſtical ſpirit hath moſt ſordid apprehenſions of God; it doth not take him up in the greatneſs of his nature, nor in the authority of his word. God looks not like a God to that perſon: the word of God is not like the word of God; the ſweet promiſes are but empty notions to the man; the ſharp threatenings of hell and wrath, are but terrible fables to him. O ſeek that the power of God may remove this impediment; otherwiſe you will never believe, nor receive Chriſt.

2. Another impediment is *groſs ignorance;* ignorance of God and of Chriſt. Many fooliſhly queſtion, whether or not they have an intereſt in Chriſt, before ever they know that there is a Chriſt: they are ignorant of Chriſt, and his excellency; ignorant of the law, and its ſeverity; ignorant of the goſpel, and its condeſcendency; ignorant of themſelves, and their ſinfulneſs, and miſery, and their abſolute need that they ſtand in of this glorious goſpel-remedy. If they knew the diſpoſition of God towards ſinners out of Chriſt, they would not take reſt, while they are expoſed to that conſuming fire, and within the flood-mark of his wrath. If they were not ignorant of their natural ſtate, they would not reſt content in that ſtate. If they knew Chriſt, they would not be content to live without him: *If thou knoweſt the gift of God,* ſays Chriſt to the woman of Samaria, *and who it is that ſaith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldeſt have aſked of him, and he would have given thee living water,* John iv. x. *My people are deſtroyed for lake of knowledge.* O ignorant ſouls, you are nearer hell than others; your ſtate is darkneſs, and it borders upon utter darkneſs. You ſwear, and lie, and drink drunk, and

and break the Sabbath, and commit uncleanneſs; you ſlight ordinances, you ſlight duties, you ſlight prayer, in ſecret and family; you go on in ſin without flying to Chriſt; and all is becauſe of your ignorance: *They that know his name put their truſt in him;* but you know him not, and therefore believe not. Why, ſay you, many have knowledge that make no good uſe of it; yea, they are more graceleſs and profane, than we that are poor ignorant creatures. I anſwer, That their knowledge is but head-knowledge, and not heart-knowledge; or elſe it would influence their heart and life; and they have a ſad account to make, for ſinning againſt ſo much knowledge: but this will not help you; for profanity kills them, and ignorance kills you; they die of one diſeaſe, and you die of another. Will you reject knowledge becauſe ſome abuſe it? Why, that is as ridiculous as to ſay, Becauſe many die, who have both food and phyſic, and plenty of means for preſerving life; therefore, I will uſe no means, for preſerving of my life at all. They that have food and phyſic may die; but they that have none of them cannot live; ſo, whoever periſh, ignorant perſons, that ſlight the means, are ſure to periſh.

3. A third impediment of faith that you need to ſeek removed is *preſumption.* Many preſume they have Chriſt already, and thus they need not receive him: they will not confeſs that they want Chriſt. Many preſume they have a righteouſneſs of their own: Chriſt ſpoke a parable to certain perſons that truſted in themſelves, that they were righteous. If a proud man hath money in his houſe, he will ſcorn to be obliged to his neighbour: ſo it is with the proud ſinner, his language is, *I have never wronged any man;* none can ſay, black is the eye of my head; I am neither whore nor thief; I have a good heart to God; and have done as well as I could. Alas! poor deluded creature, cannot the God, who *charges his angels with folly*, ſee a fault in you? yea, millions of deformities doth he ſee: and is this a ſufficient bottom for you to ſail in to heaven? There is a leck in the veſſel that will ſink you for ever into the bottomleſs pit: the ſoul is the paſſenger, graces are the ſails, the Spirit is the

the wind, but Chriſt only is the bottom, in which you can ſail ſafe to glory. It is ſaid of ſome in the Acts, *They came and burnt their books, whenever they came and believed in Chriſt:* ſo, if ever you believe in Chriſt, that traſh muſt be burnt; you muſt be forced out of yourſelves, and obliged to relinquiſh every thing about you.

4. The next impediment of faith is *earthly mindedneſs* and *worldly diſpoſitions*. The vanity of the world ſo poſſeſſes the mind, that there is no room for Chriſt: the thoughts of the world ſhut out the thoughts of God. As Saul hid himſelf among the ſtuff; ſo, many are buried and obſorded in the midſt of the world. And yet, all the beſt things of the world are like the ſhadow of the ſun, which the leaſt cloud can remove; like a heap of chaff, which the wind can blow away; and like Jonah's gourd, which any worm can eat out.

5. A fifth impediment of faith is a *heart-league with ſin*, which hinders the match with Chriſt: why, we are married to other lovers, and in love with ſin; Chriſt comes as a *Saviour to ſave from ſin;* well, he is welcome; yea, but it is to ſave from ſuch a beloved ſin as your drunkenneſs, whoredom, lewd and carnal company: why, here the heart recoils; Oh! I cannot live without my nature; I cannot part with Benjamin. At the root of unbelief, try when you will, you will find the heart is in league with ſome luſt which it cannot part with. O Sirs, Seek the removal of theſe impediments.

6. Impediment of faith is the *cunning artifices* of *natural unbelief*. The unbelieving heart hath a thouſand deceits whereby it keeps off people from Chriſt, and from the receiving of him. Sometimes unbelief preſents impoſſibilities before the man: O it is impoſſible that God will have mercy on you: it is impoſſible that the like of you can get to heaven. Unbelief will preſent a thouſand difficulties and diſcouragements; *there is a lion in the way:* you will never be able to believe; never be able to pray; never be able to hold on in God's way. Unbelief doth harden the heart, and turn it ſo ſtupid, that they are no more moved with the word, than if they were a thouſand miles from ordinances. Unbelief fills the heart with ſlothfulneſs, ſo as the man doth not

put

put forth his hand, as it were, to receive the offered Saviour and ſalvation. Yea, unbelief preſents a world of wrong objects of faith, and that hinders true faith, or believing in, and receiving of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the only true object.

There are four things that unbelief doth cunningly lead men to build upon, that ſeem good things, and are ſo indeed; but yet wrong objects of faith, namely, ſenſe, duties, graces, providence.

(1.) Through the cunning of unbelief, a man will build his faith upon *ſenſe*, and not upon Chriſt: thus Thomas, *Except I put my fingers into the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into the hole of his ſide, I will not believe.* O Sirs, to believe in a bare word of promiſe, abſtract from ſenſe, is a great myſtery: and therefore, when one makes ſenſe and feeling his idol, God uſually withdraws himſelf, and denies ſenſible tokens of his preſence, that he may learn to build upon Chriſt only, or upon a bare word of promiſe, and not upon any ſenſible enjoyment.

(2.) Through the cunning of unbelief, a man will build his faith upon his *duties*, and *eſtabliſhing a righteouſneſs of his own, and not ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of God.* And thus he builds upon ſelf: or, like the whoriſh woman that divided the child, he makes the object of his faith, half Chriſt, and half ſelf, when unbelief cannot prevail to exclude Chriſt wholly.

(3.) Through the cunning of unbelief, a man will build his faith upon his *graces;* and ſo lies open to that challenge, Ezek. xvi. 15. *Thou didſt put thy truſt in thy beauty.* And thus, through the cunning of the old ſerpent, and of unbelief, the man will build his faith upon his faith, and not his faith upon Chriſt: it is not Chriſt that is the righteouſneſs of ſuch perſons, but their faith is their righteouſneſs. Hence many can give no other ground of their faith, but juſt this, *they believe:* and what is the foundation of their faith? Why, they believe, becauſe they believe; they hope to be ſaved, becauſe they believe: and whence do they believe, but becauſe they believe? Alas! it is a fancy inſtead of faith; and a fancy built upon a fancy.

(4.) Through

(4.) Through the cunning of unbelief, a man will build his faith upon *providence:* hence, aſk at ſome people, what is the ground of their hope for heaven? O, ſay they, God hath been good and kind to me all my days; he hath many times protected me from danger, and provided for me in difficulties, and fed me in my ſtraits; yea, perhaps, he is only feeding you for a day of ſlaughter: no man can know love or hatred by theſe outward providences.—Theſe wrong objects of faith, and grounds of believing, are great obſtacles and impediments, in the way of true believing and receiving of Chriſt.

Now, O Sirs, ſeek that all theſe impediments of faith may be taken out of the way; whether it be atheiſm, ignorance, preſumption, earthly-mindedneſs, a heart-league with ſin, or the cunnings of natural unbelief, preſenting wrong objects of faith. Another direction is,

[4.] Study the art of *pleading with God* for *grace to receive Chriſt.* It is true, God is not bound to hear an unbeliever's prayer; but he that *hears the ravens when they cry*, may hear you when you plead with him for the bleſſing. And, if you would learn the art of pleading, there are ſix pleas, or arguments, wherewith you may urge him to pity you.

1. Plead his *promiſe*, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you: and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes; and ye ſhall keep my judgments, and do them.* It is a free and gracious promiſe: cry to him to make good that word to you, ſeeing he hath ſaid, *For this will I be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them*, ver. 37. Tell him, that now you are come to enquire, and requeſt him to do it.

2. Plead your own *impotency* and *inability* to help yourſelves; this was the impotent man's plea at the pool of Bethesda, John v. 6, 7. *When Jeſus ſaw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that caſe, he ſaith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man anſwered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled,*

troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another ſteppeth down before me. So ſay you, Lord, I have lain many years with this dead plagued heart, beſide the open fountain of thy blood; I am unable to move to it of myſelf; I have none to put me in: ordinances cannot do it; miniſters cannot do it; thou muſt put to thy helping hand, or elſe the work will remain unperformed.

3. Plead his *power*, in a ſenſe of your own impotency. Do you feel the power and multitude of your corruptions within you? Say with Jehoſaphat, *Lord, I have no might againſt this great company; neither do I know what to do: but mine eyes are upon thee.* With thee all things are poſſible. Though I may deſpair of help in myſelf and others; yet, thou haſt forbid me to deſpair of help in thee. *Thou ſaidſt, Let there be light, and there was light;* O ſay, let there be faith, and it will immediately take place; for faith is thy work and thy gift: it is *the* WORK *of God that we believe; By grace we are ſaved, through faith, and that not of ourſelves, it is the* GIFT *of God.* He is *the author and finiſher of faith.*

4. Plead your *neceſſity*, your extreme need of Chriſt, and of faith in him. O man, there is not a ſtarving man that needs meat ſo much, as you need Chriſt: there is not an wounded man, that needs a phyſician; a ſhipwrecked man, that needs a plank; a dying man with the dead rattle in his throat, that needs breath ſo much, as thou doſt need Chriſt. O then, cry, *Give me Chriſt, or elſe I die.* I may live without friends, without wealth, and honour, and pleaſure; but I cannot live without Chriſt, and without faith.—Plead his *power;* how eaſy is it for him to help, ſaying, as in Pſal. lxxx. 1. *O thou that dwelleſt between the cherubims, ſhine forth?* it will coſt thee no more pain to work faith in me, than it doth the ſun to ſhine forth. Yea, he can more eaſily put forth his power and grace, than the ſun can dart out its beams. It is no trouble nor loſs to the ſun to ſhine forth; ſo neither will it be to him, to ſhew forth his power and mercy: a look, or a touch, will do it; ſince he can ſo eaſily do it. You may cry with hope; he will never miſs an alms beſtowed on a beggar, out of the ocean of his bounty. Nay, as the ſun, the more it ſhines, diſ-

plays its glory the more; ſo will he gain glory by putting forth his power to help you.

5. Plead his *mercy*, and the freeneſs and communicativeneſs of it.—Plead the *freeneſs* of his mercy, that needs no motive, and expects no worth: it runs freely, ſo that the mountains cannot ſtop the current thereof, no more than the rocks can ſtop the ebbing and flowing of the ſea.—Plead the *communicativeneſs* of his mercy to others: he had compaſion on men's bodies, that came to him for healing, and will he not have compaſſion upon ſouls, that come to him for life? Is not mercy the work that he delights in? that perfection of his nature that he takes pleaſure to diſplay?

6. Plead Chriſt's *commiſſion*, Iſa. lxi. 1. that he came *to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of priſon-doors to them that are bound.* Cry, Lord, here is a *poor* priſoner, a locked and bound up heart; here is employment for thee: O looſe and knock off my fetters, and bring my ſoul out of priſon.—O here is a *naked* ſinner for thee to cover, a wounded ſoul for thee to cure, a loſt ſheep for thee to ſeek and ſave; and, was not this thy errand? Thou didſt *come to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt.* And, wilt thou not be found of a loſt ſinner, that deſires to ſeek thee, through thy grace?—Plead his commiſſion under the broad ſeal of heaven; for, *Him hath God the Father ſealed.* And plead the value of his blood, and merit of his righteouſneſs; and upon that ground whereby all grace is purchaſed: plead for faith, and grace to *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.*

Thus I have laid before you ſome directions, in order to the receiving of Chriſt. O cry for grace to follow them, and put them in practice, ſo as you may indeed cloſe the bargain with him.—— I ſhould now anſwer ſome *objections*, but am prevented with your time.— O ſhall all theſe directions be loſt, and Chriſt be ſtill ſlighted and rejected! O Sirs, you cannot pleaſe God better, than by coming to Chriſt, and embracing the offer of him: and you cannot pleaſe the devil better, than by refuſing the offer of Chriſt; and putting him off with delays, till you inevitably periſh in your unbelief.

And now, after all that hath been ſaid, what are you reſolved

reſolved upon? Will you receive Chriſt, or not? Our glorious Lord and Maſter hath ſent us to poſe you, man, woman; and demand whether you will receive him or not? O! What anſwer ſhall we return? Muſt we go and ſay, that all this people, upon no terms, will receive him; none of them are for precious Chriſt? Oh! God forbid! ſhall he not *ſee the travel of his ſoul*, who travelled thro' all the armies of God's wrath for you, and gave his ſoul an offering for your ſin? O give your ſoul to him, ſaying, Lord, in ſpite of the devil and of unbelief, through grace I will open my heart and arms to receive Chriſt! ——The Lord himſelf help you to *receive him*, and *walk in him*.

SERMON XLIV.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The eleventh Sermon on this text.]

THERE are two things, that the ſum of Chriſtianity, and the whole of a goſpel-life doth conſiſt in; and they both have a reſpect to Chriſt; and are theſe, in ſhort, 1. To *take* him; 2. To *uſe* him. Now, behold Chriſt's name ſounds in the ears of multitudes, that never yet could be perſuaded, to take him and uſe him: to take him as he is offered, and to uſe and improve him as he is taken; yet this is the great call of God in the words of our text; *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him:* where the way to heaven is deſcribed, by *taking* Chriſt, ſo as to receive him as Chriſt Jeſus the Lord; and then by uſing and unproving him, ſo as to walk in him ſuitably to that reception. The receiving of Chriſt being the leading thing here, without which there can be no walking in him; therefore, I have inſiſted a conſiderable time on this exhortation to receive Chriſt. But

after all that hath been ſaid for conviction, excitation, and direction, perhaps the hearts of hearers are filled with a thouſand objections, againſt this great and neceſſary duty of *receiving Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.* And this leads us,

4*thly*, To the *fourth* thing, upon this uſe of exhortation to receive Chriſt, which was to anſwer ſome *objections.* We cannot anſwer the half of them; yea, no man or angel can anſwer one of them without Chriſt. All objections whatſoever would vaniſh before the grace of the goſpel, righly underſtood, and powerfully diſplayed. Chriſt ſtands in the goſpel ready, to hear and anſwer all your objections; and he can do it with a word.

If the ſoul ſay, I have no right to receive Chriſt, for I am a great ſinner: his anſwer is ready; *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.*—O, ſays the ſoul, my ſins are red as crimſon; Well, ſays Chriſt, *I can make thee white as wool.*—Oh! but I have no reaſon to hope; for I am a loſt creature: nay, ſays Chriſt, *I came to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt;* and many a loſt ſheep I have ſought and found.—O but, ſays one, I am paſt cure, for I am dead and rotten in the grave of ſin: nay, but ſays Chriſt, *I am the reſurrection and the life.*—O but, ſays the ſoul, I am a ſlave to ſin and Satan, and a priſoner to juſtice: Well, ſays Chriſt in his word, *I am come to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound.*—O but I have many burdens of ſin, and guilt, and confuſion; and innumerable burdens, that I cannot mention: well, ſays Chriſt, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.*—O but, my hand is withered, I cannot receive Chriſt: well, in this caſe, Chriſt bids you *ſtretch forth the withered hand*, believing in him for grace to believe; and coming to him for grace to come.—O but, ſays the ſoul, I am lame, and cannot walk in Chriſt, or in his way: well, ſays Chriſt, *I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes.*—Ah! but he may withdraw his Spirit, and depart from me: no, ſay Chriſt, *I will make an everlaſting covenant with thee; I will not turn away from them*

to

to do them good.—O! but I may depart from him, and make apoſtacy: no, ſays Chriſt, Jer. xxxii. 4. *I will put my fear in your heart, that ye ſhall not depart from me.* And Jer. iii. 19. *Thou ſhalt call me, My Father, and ſhalt not turn away from me.*—O! but I may be overcome with ſtrong temptations: well, ſays Chriſt, *Fear not, for I am with thee; my grace is ſufficient for thee.*—Alas! but I have been a great backſlider already: well, ſays Chriſt, there is a word for you to rely on, in anſwer to that, *I will heal your backſlidings, and love you freely.*—And thus Chriſt, in the word of grace, and goſpel of ſalvation, ſtands ready to anſwer every objection.

But more particularly, we might open the *grounds* of manifold objections, that ſinners make againſt believing in, or receiving of Chriſt.

1. Objections are drawn from the *greatneſs* and *multitude of ſins.* It is true, there are ſome who have no ſuch objection as this at all; they are as ſecure, ſenſeleſs, and ſtupid, as a ſtone of the wall: there is no hope of ſaying any thing, to move and affect ſuch, unleſs the Lord himſelf awaken them. But if any here were objecting to this purpoſe, though it was but one in all this company; "Oh! my guilt is ſo grievous, my ſins are "ſo great, and my tranſgreſſions are ſo multiplied, that "you would tremble to think of the ſins I have been "guilty of, and what light I have ſinned againſt; and "this makes my heart ſink: none knows, but God "and my own conſcience, what a ſinner I have been; "and will Chriſt ever accept of me?" *Anſw.* The greatneſs of your ſins ſhould be a great argument to engage you to come to Chriſt, and receive him. Your ſins are not greater than God's mercies; your guilt is not greater than Chriſt's merits. It is hardly to be ſuppoſed, that you are worſe that ſome who yet have obtained mercy; ſuch as Paul, a perſecutor and blaſphemer; Manaſſeh, a murderer and wizard, in compact with the devil; Mary Magdalene, in whom were ſeven devils; and many of the Jews that crucified the Lord of glory, who yet were waſhed in that blood of the Lamb, which they ſhed. The merit of Chriſt's blood is infinite; though your ſins were greater than all ſins, yet there

there is virtue in his blood to expiate them; for, it *cleanſes from all ſin.* Though the ſands be many and large, yet the ſea can overflow them all: ſo, though your ſins be numerous and great, the blood of Chriſt can cover them all.—In a word, the queſtion is not about the *greatneſs* of your ſins, but your *preſent duty*: be your ſin what it will, the Lord calls you to come to Chriſt and receive him: and your unbelief, in your rejecting Chriſt, is greater than all your other ſins; for it is a refuſal of the remedy, whereby you may be relieved of all your ſin and guilt. Your other ſins are but againſt the law; but this ſin, in rejecting Chriſt, is againſt the law and the goſpel both. Other ſins are againſt God; but this ſin, in rejecting Chriſt, is againſt God and Chriſt both. It is a great ſin to think any ſin little; but it is a greater ſin, to think the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is not above all ſin. Our diſobedience is the diſobedience of man; but Chriſt's obedience is the obedience of God: therefore, our believing in Chriſt doth pleaſe God better, than if we had continued in innocency, and never ſinned. The leaſt ſin is unpardonable without this obedience and righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and the greateſt is pardonable by it. Therefore, O ſeek in to Chriſt, to be clothed upon with this righteouſneſs.

2. Objections are drawn from the *juſtice of God.* "Oh, God is juſt, and will not hold the ſinner guiltleſs: therefore, though I ſhould fly to the horns of the altar, there I fear juſtice would be avenged upon me." *Anſ.* This is alſo an argument why you ſhould receive Chriſt. God's juſtice indeed muſt be ſatisfied; and there is no way in the world, to give ſatisfaction to God, but by believing in Chriſt; for, *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf:* he hath endured the wrath of God, and ſo there is no way to anſwer juſtice, but by flying to that ſatisfaction he hath made; and if you do, juſtice will not demand a double ſatisfaction; one from thee, and another from thy Surety: no, he will *deliver from going down to the pit, becauſe he hath found a ranſom.* It is contrary to the nature of juſtice, to demand a double ſatisfaction, when the ſatisfaction given by Chriſt is infinite.

3. Objection

3. Objection is drawn from the *ſinner's unworthineſs.* "Oh! I am utterly unworthy, and have nothing to "move God to pity me; will he accept of the like of "me?" *Anſ.* What think ye is the ſtrength of that reaſoning? It comes juſt to this: I have no merit; therefore, God will have no mercy: there is no ſalvation for me by the law; therefore there is no ſalvation for me by the goſpel. If you look at God with a legal eye, the leaſt ſin makes you uncapable of mercy; but if you look at him in Chriſt, or with an evangelical eye, the greateſt ſinner is capable of mercy; yea, the ſenſe of unworthineſs makes a man the more capable. It is an unworthy objection, and argues lamentable ignorance of the goſpel. Come to him as deſerving nothing but wrath, and flying to God's free grace, and Chriſt's full merit, and the covenant's rich promiſe. It is with faith, as it is with a bird caſt into the water, it cannot fly, the element is ſo groſs; it cannot clap its wings there; but caſt it into the air, then it will clap its wings and mount: ſo, faith is the wing of the ſoul; when it looks to the man's ſelf, and his own worthineſs, this is ſuch a groſs element faith cannot mount: but let it out to the air of God's free grace and promiſe in Chriſt, then it will act and fly: yea, grace cannot act but upon an unworthy object, and without any cauſe from the object. Juſtice hath an eye upon the diſpoſition of the perſon, in its rewards; but grace and mercy hath an eye upon itſelf. Thus, if a king execute a malefactor, this is an act of juſtice, and the cauſe of it is in the offender; but if a king pardon a malefactor, this is an act of grace, and the cauſe of it is in the king's breaſt, not in the worthineſs of the dilinquent: ſo here, if you was worthy, you were not capable of this free gift. If ever there was a gift freely given, it is Chriſt; and will you reject him becauſe you are unworthy? Why, if you was worthy, it would not be a free gift. Nay, your refuſing of Chriſt, and ſtanding aback from him, for your unworthineſs, is great pride: you would have a bladder of your own, that you might ſwim to heaven, without being obliged to Chriſt. If you meet a poor beggar, and ſee nothing but miſery and poverty in his face, and draw your purſe

and

and offer him a ſhilling; would it not be ſtrange to hear him ſay, No, I will not have it; I am not worthy; yonder is a gentleman in gay clothing, give it him, for he is worthy? Juſt as ridiculous is the caſe here, while you ſtand aback from Chriſt, becauſe of your unworthineſs. In a word, Chriſt is worthy enough of your taking. What if the greateſt prince in the world ſhould make ſuit to the pooreſt beggar, that hath neither beauty nor dowry, though ſhe be unworthy to hear of the propoſal, yet the perſon is worthy who hath made it, and the acceptance of the motion is reaſonable: ſo it is here, if Chriſt, the *Prince of life*, and *King of glory*, be worth the receiving, then reject not his offer that he makes of himſelf: and indeed never will you be worthy till you receive him.

4. Objection is drawn from a doubt and ſuſpicion ariſing in the mind if Chriſt be *willing*: "Oh! I fear "he is not willing to accept of me." *Anſw.* He *declares*, in his word, that he is not *willing that any ſhould periſh*; and he *ſwears* that he hath *no delight in the death of ſinners*. And, O ſinner! will you look up to God's face and ſay, though he hath both ſaid and ſworn to that purpoſe, yet he is not willing? His purpoſe of grace in ſaving ſome, doth not ſay that he is willing to deſtroy any; it only ſays, that, as he is not willing that any ſhould periſh, ſo, he is reſolved that all ſhall not get leave to deſtroy themſelves; as all would do, if he did not catch hold of ſome, and pluck them as brands out of the burning; and his doing ſo ſays, that none are deſtroyed by him, unleſs they deſtroy themſelves. None are willing to be ſaved by him, until his willingneſs prevents theirs. His not ſaving all, is no more an argument of his willingneſs that any ſhould periſh, than a king's not pardoning all rebels, is an argument of that prince's willingneſs, that any ſhould live in rebellion againſt him, and fall under his furious reſentment: and though it was poſſible for that earthly prince, to make them all willing ſubjects to him, yet it were not inconſiſtent with a merciful diſpoſition, for him to ſuffer ſome to take their will; that he may ſhew how obſtinate their nature is, and how equal and juſt he is in the adminiſtration

tion of his government: for, acts of juſtice toward ſome is not inconſiſtent with a will to ſhow mercy upon all. Carnal reaſon and unbelief ſtill ſuſpects the willingneſs of Chriſt; eſpecially becauſe of a decree paſt in heaven, which the word mentions concerning the *ſalvation of ſome*, from which they know not but they may be excluded: but as this is a powerful temptation of Satan, leading men boldly and arrogantly, to meddle with the records of heaven, that are locked up from men and angels, till the *decree break forth*; ſo it is an evidence of our curſed enmity againſt God, that we will not believe his good-will in Chriſt, revealed in the goſpel toward ſinners, by ſo many commands and promiſes, calls and invitations. If you would obſerve inſtances of Chriſt's willingneſs; behold how he *wept over Jeruſalem*, ſelf-deſtroying Jeruſalem, rejecting his offer, Luke xix. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.* What a moving ſight was this, to ſee the Son of God in a flood of tears for loſt ſinners! Had he been enquired at, as he did Mary, in another caſe, *Bleſſed Lord, what ſeekeſt thou? why weepeſt thou?* His anſwer readily would have been, "I ſeek not myſelf; I weep not for myſelf; for, *I ſhall* "*be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, though ſinners be not* "*gathered*; but I weep to ſee ſinners ſo mad, as to re-"ject their Saviour and ſalvation, rather than part with "their luſts that have damnation attending them; I "weep to ſee them content, rather to caſt themſelves "headlong into the devil's arms, than throw themſelves "into my arms of mercy, or receive and embrace me." Oh! how did Chriſt's heart melt with pity for you, and will not your hearts melt with deſire toward him! Surely, all the rivers of tears, that flowed from his eyes, and the rivers of blood, that flowed from his pierced head, and feet, and hands, and ſide, will be ſtanding monuments of his good-will to ſave ſinners. How would you have him to diſcover his willingneſs? Why, man, woman; he juſt turns a humble ſupplicant to you; and, as it were, upon his bare knees beſeeches you to be re-

conciled to him; 2 Cor. v. 20. *We are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* O ſtupenduous and amazing condeſcenſion! Behold, divine mercy ſtooping down to a ſinner, in the humbleſt poſture, importuning him to receive a Saviour, and to receive a free remiſſion through him! Surely the humble intreaties of the great God ſhould both convince us of his willingneſs to receive us, and ſhame us out of our unwillingneſs to receive Chriſt, and ſalvation through him.

5. Objection is drawn from a doubt or ſuſpicion of our being *prepared* for receiving of Chriſt. "Oh! ſays "the ſinner, that is any way ſenſible, I am not hum- "bled enough; Chriſt comes to *bind up the broken* "*hearted;* but my heart is not broken: to *give the oil* "*of joy for mourning;* but I have not a mourning or "melting ſpirit: therefore I may not believe, or receive "Chriſt." *Anſ.* You will never reckon yourſelf humbled enough, if you would have humiliation proportioned to your ſin, which is an infinite evil. Legal humiliation, though never ſo deep, though your heart ſhould be broken in as many pieces, as the glaſs doth ſhudder againſt the wall; and though you were roaring day and night, under the diſquiet of a guilty conſcience, and fearful apprehenſions of God's wrath; yet all this will not ſay, that you are now fit for Chriſt: theſe humiliations may be merely judicial, and puniſhments of ſin, as were thoſe of Cain and Judas; therefore, you cannot judge yourſelf by your legal humiliations, but only by the iſſue and event of them. Think not, then, to bring humiliation in your hand as a price; this will but more unfit you: the beſt humiliation is, to ſee your want of humiliation; the beſt preparation, to ſee your want of preparation, and your want of all good things about you: and to receive Chriſt is the only way to true goſpel-humiliation. The law is like a thunder-clap, that terrifies; but the goſpel is like a warm ſun that diſſolves the ice. Nothing melts the ſoul more than Chriſt apprehended by faith; *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn,* Zech. xii. 10. Faith ſees

ſees the greateſt love, the ſweeteſt kindneſs; and this melts the heart. No doubt, the prodigal was more melted and broken, by his father's embracing of him ſo kindly, than by all his former miſeries. What! art thou embracing me, a ſtubborn child, and unworthy ſpendthrift! So Chriſt comes in the goſpel, ſaying, Come thou, poor ſinner, that haſt done evil as thou couldeſt; though thou haſt wronged me, and my Spirit, and my Father, and thyſelf, yet come and I will get you a pardon for all that; fear not, I will be thine to ſave thee; my blood thine, to waſh thee; my righteouſneſs thine, to juſtify thee; my Spirit thine, to ſanctify thee. O this melts the heart! What! is this for me, guilty me, rebellious me! Yea, it is for thee graciouſly and freely! O! how doth the ſoul now diſſolve into tears!

6. Objection is drawn from *fear* that the *day of grace is gone*. "Alas! I have refuſed many calls, invitations, "and offers, in ſo much that Chriſt will not regard me! "I have often ſlighted the goſpel-offer, trampled on "this precious blood; and with what confidence can I "now claim it?" *Anſw.* It is to be hoped, that while you have this call, yet to receive Chriſt, that *now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation;* if your former refuſals of Chriſt have not yet been malicious and deceitful, but rather timerarious and inadvertant, which, though a grievous ſin, yet not unpardonable: and now, ſince Chriſt doth not yet exclude you from the goſpel-offer, why do you exclude yourſelves? The more you have refuſed his offer formerly, the more you have need of a pardon. You ſhould go to God, as David, ſaying, *Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* This would indeed be a ſtrange argument with man, Pardon my crime, for it is great; but it is a ſtrong argument with God: Lord, it is great, and ſo I have more need of a pardon; it is great, and ſo thou wilt have great honour in pardoning: even as a phyſician hath in curing a deſperate diſeaſe. The ſinning againſt Chriſt's blood, or ſlighting it, is indeed a heinous ſin; but the more heinous it is, the more need you have to haſten to this blood, as the only fountain that can waſh away the guilt of trampling upon

it. Nay, though you had ſhed this blood, as the Jews did, yet you are welcome to come to it for mercy: ſee the commiſſion that Chriſt gives to his apoſtles, Luke xxiv. 46, 47. *Preach repentance, and remiſſion, in his name, to all nations, and begin at Jeruſalem.* O! why at Jeruſalem, where he was mocked, pierced, crucified? Nay, begin there; for they have moſt need of my blood to waſh them. If any thing could alienate Chriſt's heart from ſinners, ſurely the conſideration of their crucifying of him, and uſing him ſo deceitfully, might have done it; yea, ſays he, go make offer of my blood and mercy to theſe my murderers; and accordingly, it was done by Peter, Acts ii. and many of them got this blood applied to them. Again,

7. Objection is drawn from the *long continuance in ſin.* "I am an old ſinner; my ſins are of very long "continuance; I have remained long in the grave of "ſin: and I am juſt an old rotten ſinner." *Anſw.* I fear there are ſome old ſinners here very near to hell and damnation; the devil hath got the prime of their age, and he is likely to get the dregs. Oh! if goſpel-grace would draw you, I would let down the cord of love, by telling you, that, though your ſins be old, yet they are not ſo old as Chriſt's mercies, which are everlaſting mercies. It is not the firſt old diſtemper that Chriſt hath cured; he raiſed Lazarus with a word, though he had been four days in the grave: he ſtopt a bloody iſſue, with the hem of his garment, that had run twelve years: he looſed a poor woman, whom Satan had bound eighteen years: he cured an impotent man that had an infirmity thirty years: and, can he not eaſily cure all your old ſoul-diſtempers? He received thoſe that came at the eleventh hour: he received ſome that came at the laſt hour; particularly the thief on the croſs, whom the devil thought he was ſure of, having drawn him the length of the mouth of hell, juſt ready to caſt him in; yet, even then, upon his look to Chriſt, did the arms of mercy take hold of him. This is encouragement to you to look to him.

8. Objection is drawn from a doubt or jealouſy about our *right* to receive Chriſt. "Oh! ſays one, though

"Chriſt

" Chriſt can ſave me, yet I have no right to receive " him: though his blood is ſufficient to waſh me, yet " I have no right to it." *Anſw.* You have a full right and warrant, from the very call of the goſpel, to fly to it: ſee what Chriſt enjoins miniſters to do, Mark xvi. 15. *Go into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature:* Make offer of me and my blood to all, without diſtinction; whatever be their age, ſex, or circumſtances; man, woman, and child. Let no children hearing me think, they are too young to be included in this call to come to Chriſt: nay, the goſpel is preached to you as well as to old folk: you may die in your youth; and if you die without Chriſt, you will periſh as well as old Chriſtleſs perſons. *Preach the goſpel to every creature;* even to the worſt of ſinners: EVERY *creature*, be they never ſo wicked; even though they have ſinned themſelves into the likeneſs of beaſts or devils; yet, if they be creatures, offer my blood, my mercy, my merit, my righteouſneſs to them: invite and preſs them to come to me and receive me; and, *him that cometh, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* O ſinner, let the goſpel-offer be accepted; and you ſhall find, whatever you have been, that there is mercy enough in God's bowels to pity you; merit enough in Chriſt's blood to pardon you; and power enough in his interceſſion to procure and apply it to you. Look to him for a ſhare of this grace offered to you; and *receive not the grace of God in vain.*

9. Objection is drawn from the *power of ſin.* " Alas! " I find ſin to be ſtrong in me; how ſhould I believe or " receive Chriſt? none have ſuch an abominable heart; " ſurely the Lord will loath me." *Anſw.* That as a ſenſe of the power of ſin, is better than to be ſenſeleſs and ſtupid under it; ſo, conſider the nature of unbelief more than the ſtrength of ſin; for, it is *an evil heart of unbelief*, that gives ſtrength to ſin. There are two things you muſt be obliged to Chriſt for: his merit, to get the guilt of ſin pardoned; and his Spirit, to get the power of ſin ſubdued. There is no healing, but under the wings of Chriſt; and therefore you muſt go to him for it. What think you of faith, man? Is it an enemy to holineſs? No, by no means; it is the only way to it. And

do

do you find ſin oppoſing you? Why then, know, that a time of contrariety, is a time for faith to work. When a man ſees death, then it is time for faith to believe life; when he ſees the grave, it is time for faith to believe the reſurrection; when he ſees guilt, it is time for faith to believe pardoning mercy; and when he ſees ſin, it is time for faith to receive a Saviour: when he ſees ſtrong corruption, then it is time for faith to lay hold on Chriſt's ſtrength, and caſt yourſelf upon his faithful promiſe, for healing and pardoning of it. You may try other ways, but they will not do; you may waſh in other waters, but they will not cleanſe you; you may perplex your own thoughts, with a thouſand ſhifts beſides this, but they will not avail you: in Chriſt, and the promiſes of the covenant, are the cures of your ſinful nature; and faith doth apply the healing medicine. But now, to name no more,

10. Objection is drawn from the *weakneſs of the creature*, and of *means*. "Why, ſay you, I have no "ſtrength to believe; no ſtrength to pray; no heart "to duty: or, if I eſſay it at any time, I have no ſuc-"ceſs in it, no benefit by it." Here are two ſcruples, and I ſhall divide them, in order to give a more diſtinct reply.

Well then, the *firſt* part of the objection is: "Oh! "I have no ſtrength to believe, no power to receive "Chriſt; yea, no heart to pray for faith." *Anſ.* It is fit you know your own *utter impotency to believe;* they who think they can believe well enough of themſelves, they miſtake the faith of God's operation for fancy, and ſtrong imagination of their own brain. But, whereas you ſay you have no *ſtrength;* ſee that the diſeaſe lies not rather in this, that you have no *will:* if you were made willing, you undoubtedly would find yourſelves made able in due time: therefore, cry for one pull more of omnipotent grace, to make you *willing in the day of his power.* And whereas you ſay you cannot cry, you have no *heart to pray;* it is perhaps your mercy, to be kept empty handed, that you may not make a Chriſt of your duty, or a Saviour of your frame; for, perhaps, you would reſt there. However, know, that unbelief is the great

great cauſe of indiſpoſition for duty; for it fills the man with hard thoughts of God: "Oh! ſays unbelief, God "is ſo holy, he will never regard you; God is ſo juſt, "he will never endure you." Unbelief makes God all full of frowns and anger; and ſo the man's ſpirit ſinks within him: but faith would bring up the ſoul; Pſal. xxvii. 13. *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord, in the land of the living.* Faith ſhews God to be on a throne of grace; and this raiſes the heart: and faith ſets the ſoul upon prevailing motives in prayer; ſuch as, the name of God, the blood of Chriſt, the promiſe of the covenant, the interceſſion of Chriſt, the faithfulneſs of God. In the mean time, think not either to believe or pray aright, without oppoſition from Satan, an evil heart of unbelief, the prevelancy of ſin, and an enſnaring world. You muſt wreſtle, through grace, all the way to glory: *The kingdom of heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus. Preſs toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

The *ſecond* part of the objection is, "That, though "you eſſay, you find no ſucceſs in duty, no benefit by "it; I am ſtill where I was." *Anſ.* True ſeeking comes always to ſomething: it is pride and impatience that ſays, *It is vain to ſerve the Lord:* See Mal. iii. 14, 18. and Iſa. lx. 22, 23, 24. *God is faithful who hath promiſed.* It is true, many *aſk and receive not, becauſe they aſk amiſs, and do not aſk in faith, nothing wavering.* How ſhould we ſpeed, or what ſucceſs can we expect, if we tell the true God to his face, that he is a liar and diſſembler; that he will not make good a word that he ſays? Therefore, ſeek the removal of this unbelief.

Beſides, remember that there is a twofold anſwer that God makes; real and ſenſible. A king may ſign a pardon and yet the criminal not know it, for a time: an anſwer may be given ſometimes when we know not of it; *e. g.* You ſeek, perhaps, a heart to pray, and a heart to hate ſin: well, upon this, perhaps, you find your heart harder, to your feeling, than it was; and your corruption burſting forth upon you; which makes

you

you ly grovelling, with the moſt fervent importunity, at heaven's gate, and begets the moſt extreme loathing of your depraved nature: why, here you get the very thing you was ſeeking, yet you are not ſenſible that theſe things are anſwers; becauſe the anſwer comes in a way, contrary to your expectation: for the heart may have ſuch thirſtings after grace, ſuch an abomination of ſin, that theſe preſent anſwers from heaven may ſeem to be nothing; there is ſomething more the man would have: preſent grants are not a ſatisfying of his deſire; yet ſomething is got by every faithful ſeeking: the man gets either more addition to ſome grace, or more averſion to ſome ſin; or more grace to ſeek, or more ſtrength to wait. But though ye get not ſo much as you deſire, ſurely you get more than you deſerve; though not ſo much as to ſatisfy, yet as much as to help for the preſent. But ſuppoſe you be not anſwered at all, it is your ſin to murmer, and your duty to wait: and remember, that God never gives his people ſo large an alms here, but that they need to become beggars, the next hour, at the throne of grace again: and know, that God loves to be urged, but he does not love to be haſtened. If God doth promiſe, it is your duty to believe: if he delays, it is your duty to wait; for, he *waits that he may be gracious;* and, *bleſſed are all they that wait for him.* In a word, the Lord may keep his door bolted, that you may be provoked to knock the harder. The woman of Canaan took up the deſign of Chriſt's refuſing to anſwer her; therefore ſhe turns the more importunate; and ſo gets all her will. Therefore, whatever diſcouragement you meet with, reſolve never to quit the throne of grace, but always to lay yourſelves in Chriſt's way, and never to go to another for help; yea, that you will die waiting on him. Remember David's experience, Pſalm xl. 1. *I waited patiently on the Lord, and at length he inclined his ear, and heard my cry.* You may meet with diſcouragement and temptation, and be put to very hard thoughts; but you muſt be reſolute in looking to Chriſt for help; reaſoning with yourſelves like the four lepers at the ſiege of Samaria, 2 Kings vii. 4. If I live at a diſtance from Chriſt I will infallibly periſh, there is

no

no hope for me: if Chriſt pity me not, when I am waiting on him, I but periſh; but yet there is hope, he will have pity at length; therefore, if I periſh, I will periſh at Chriſt's feet; ſtill looking up to him, where never one yet periſhed: and I hope he will not let me be the firſt.

Thus I have eſſayed to anſwer *ſome objections:* but after all there may be thouſands of objections that remain; and it is the Lord only that can effectually and powerfully anſwer them, or any of thoſe already mentioned. But whatever be your objections, againſt receiving Chriſt, pray to Chriſt himſelf to anſwer them: he is content that you receive him for this end, to anſwer all your objections, as well as to pardon all your ſins, and ſubdue all your corruptions.

Notwithſtanding of all that hath been ſaid, perhaps ſome are ready to think, my objection hath not been mentioned; my caſe has not been touched; for, it is a ſingular caſe: I am no more moved with all that hath been ſaid, than a ſtone in the wall. Well, it might give ſome ground for faith, if you conſider that Chriſt can, *out of theſe ſtones, raiſe up children to Abraham;* and that he hath promiſed to take away the heart of ſtone. O Sirs, will ye put him to his word? Nay, ſay you, my heart is raging in enmity againſt him, like a devil. Well, ſay not, for all that, there is no hope; for, Chriſt can caſt out devils; and it is his work and buſineſs to put evil ſpirits out, and to put his own Spirit within you: only give him employment; for it is one of the ways of receiving him, even to employ him to receive you, and to deſtroy the works of the devil within yon. If Chriſt get no employment here, among all this large company, wo is us, that you ſhould all give ſuch a vile ſlight to precious Chriſt, as that you prefer your baſe luſts to him, and will not ſo much as deſire him, to put the ſacrificing knife to the throat of your luſts; and though he ſtand knocking at your door, yet you will not ſo much as deſire him to come in; nor invite you to ſhut up the door. If any body knock at your door, you will readily deſire them to open, and come forward: and ſhall not precious Chriſt get ſo much reception as

that from you? O invite him, at leaſt, to *put in his hand by the hole of the door*, and then *your bowels will move for him*, Song v. 4.——May the Lord perſuade you to receive Chriſt, and anſwer all your objections againſt him!

SERMON XLV.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The twelfth Sermon on this text.]

GRACE is not an idle habit, but an operative principle: religion doth not make men loiterers, but labourers. After a man hath believed in Chriſt, and received him, he is not then to ly down upon a bed of ſlothfulneſs, as if he had no more ado: nay, he hath much work, relative to God's glory, and his own good, to be employed about: he hath duties to be performed; many evils to be reformed; many ordinances to be improved; many heart-plagues to be healed; many temptations to be reſiſted; many enemies to be vanquiſhed; many graces to be exerciſed; many corruptions to be mortified: much employment to give to Chriſt all his days; therefore, *As he hath received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo he is to walk in him.*

We have already handled, at conſiderable length, the firſt branch of the exhortation, which was to *unbelievers* to receive Chriſt. We now proceed,

Secondly, To the ſecond branch of the *exhortation*, which was to BELIVERS, who have *received Chriſt*, that they *walk in him*. It is a *walking*, and a walking *in Chriſt*, that they are called unto.

I have already, on the doctrinal part, handled this branch of the text, at ſome length, and ſpoken of the duty

duty of walking; the qualification of it, as it is a walking in Chriſt; and alſo the rule of this walk, or the proportion it ſhould bear to our reception of Chriſt, by conſidering the AS and the SO in the text: *AS ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, SO walk ye in him.* And therefore, all that now remains is, (by way of exhortation and direction) to preſs, excite, and direct unto this walk. And in order to the more diſtinct purſuing of this exhortation, I would, 1. Offer ſome *conſiderations*, for clearing our thoughts and conceptions, concerning this walk. 2. Some *qualifications*, or *properties* of this walk, and of the way wherein we are to walk. 3. Some *motives* and *perſuaſives* that believers have to walk in Chriſt. 4. Some *directions* in order to our walking in Chriſt. If in proſecuting any of theſe particulars, any head ſhall occur, that may coincide with what was ſaid on the doctrinal part; yet the different enlargement will, I hope, make the whole tend to be of new uſefulneſs.

1*ſt*, I am to offer ſome *conſiderations*, for clearing our thoughts and uptakings concerning this walk; and for paving the way to what may afterward be offered upon this exhortation. And the

1. Conſideration I offer is, that this *Chriſtian walk* is not to be expected in any, that are not *Chriſtians indeed:* yea, it is impoſſible for a man to have a truly Chriſtian walk, if he be not truly a Chriſtian. What is it to be a Chriſtian? Why, it is for Chriſt to be in a man by his Spirit, and the man to be in Chriſt by faith.—It is for *Chriſt to be in a man by his Spirit:* and indeed Chriſt muſt be in us by his Spirit, as a Spirit of regeneration, before we can poſſibly come to him by faith: and as regeneration is primarily ſuppoſed to this walk, none can walk in Chriſt if Chriſt be not in them, and if they be ſtill in a ſtate of nature and unregeneracy: the regenerating Spirit is the ſpring of this walk. Men, in their natural ſtate, are dead, and cannot walk. I have read of one that attempted, by art, to make a ſtatue to walk and ſpeak; but after all, when he found his art fail him, and the thing impracticable, he was obliged to cry out, *Aliquod deeſt intus;* "There is ſomething wanting "within." Why, there wanted a ſoul, a living princi-

ple within. So it is here; men in nature are but like dead ſtatues, they want ſomething within to make them walk in Chriſt. It is true, as watches may go right for an hour or two, but will not hold on, if the ſpring be amiſs: ſo, natural men, may take a pace or two, in the ways of God, but they cannot walk unleſs the ſpring be right, the heart be renewed, and the Spirit of Chriſt be put within them.—Again, to be a Chriſtian, it is for a *man to be in Chriſt by faith:* there is no walking in him, till there be a receiving of him, and cloſing with him: if a man be not in Chriſt, he cannot walk in Chriſt. Without faith there is not ſo much as a good thought, or conſideration about a Chriſtian walk: Now, ſerious conſideration is requiſite thereunto; *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet to thy teſtimonies. Without faith is is impoſſible to pleaſe God:* but to walk in Chriſt is a walk that pleaſeth God; and therefore without faith it is impoſſible to walk in Chriſt. Faith takes in the ſtrength of God to enable us to walk: and without this ſtrength we cannot walk; for, *The way of the man is not in himſelf: it is not in man that walketh to order his ſteps.* Therefore, without faith, drawing ſtrength from him, we cannot walk in him: Why? becauſe we cannot walk with God, without God; nor walk in Chriſt, without Chriſt. In a word, it comes all to this: A Chriſtian walk cannot be without a Chriſtian ſtate. O then, ſeek to be Chriſtians indeed; *i. e.* To have Chriſt in you by his Spirit, and you in Chriſt by faith: and not only to be in him by faith in the habit; but to abide in him by faith in the lively exerciſe thereof; for, without this, *you cannot bring forth fruit in him,* John xv. 5.

2. Conſideration I offer is, that there are not a *few profeſſors,* whoſe *walk* doth give their *profeſſion the lie:* as thoſe ſpoken of, Pſalm lxxviii. 34,—37. *They returned, and enquired early after God: and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their Redeemer: nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with God, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his covenant.* Many *profeſs to know God, but in works they do deny him.* Many profeſs the name of Chriſt, who never ſet upon the

the buſineſs of renovation, to be renewed in the Spirit of their mind; and ſo they are in the caſe of thoſe, Pſalm l. 16,—22. to whom God ſaith, *What haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes, and take my covenant in thy mouth; ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee?* &c. Yea, many walk, of whom the apoſtle *tells us weeping, that they are enemies to the croſs of Chriſt; whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, and whoſe glory is in their ſhame, and who mind earthly things,* Phil. iii. 18, 19.

3. Conſideration is, that they who profeſs to be Chriſtians, and yet have no Chriſtian walk, or know nothing of *walking in Chriſt*, they *deceive themſelves* with their profeſſion; *they get no good of it*, and *God gets no glory by it.*—They *deceive themſelves.* Profeſſors, who are not practical, they are but ſoul-cheaters, ſelf-cheaters: they are the worſt of all cheats that cheat themſelves; *If any man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain*, James i. 26. And ſo, *if any man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his* HEART, but giveth way to all carnal thoughts, worldly thoughts, while *God is not in all his thoughts;* that *man's religion is vain.* —*If any man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his* APPETITE, but giveth way to gluttony and drunkenneſs, *that man's religion is vain.*—*If any man ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his* PASSIONS, but giveth way to anger, and wrath, and malice, and revenge, for every injury, *that man's religion is vain.*—*If any man ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his* LIPS, but giveth way to lying, and ſwearing, and curſing, and obſcene filthy talking, *that man's religion is vain.*—*If any man ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not the* FACULTIES of his ſoul, and members of his body, his hands and his feet from working miſchief, and walking in the broad ways of whoredom, and Sabbath-breaking, and neglect of God's worſhip, in ſecret, private, and public, *that man's religion is vain;* he *deceiveth his own heart.*—It is true, the godly have ſometimes caſt off the bridle, or kept very ſlack reigns, and ſo ſtumbled greatly, and fallen foully: but this is not the tenor of their walk, nor the way

way that, as Chriſtians, they can take pleaſure in. And, therefore, the propoſition remains thus ever firm: they that profeſs to be Chriſtians, without having a Chriſtian walk, they *deceive themſelves.*—Yea, they *get no good of their profeſſion*, and are in the caſe of thoſe, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. *They come and appear before God as his people; they ſit before him, and hear his words, but they will not do them: for, with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.* They got no good of their profeſſion, who know nothing of the life and power of godlineſs: their religion is vain; they pleaſe themſelves with the empty ſhell, but never eat the kernel. —And as they get no good by it, ſo *God gets no glory by it*, nor the goſpel any credit. A profeſſion without a Chriſtian walk, is no ornament to religion: we ought to *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in all things. Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.* The man that hath nothing of this, deſerveth not the name of a profeſſor. Oh! how many plagues are in our boſſom, that make, inſtead of an ornament to religion, a ſtain to the Chriſtian name! like thoſe, 1 Tim. v. 24. *Some men's ſins are open before hand, going before to judgment; and ſome follow after.* Which words ſeem to be ſpoken concerning church cenſures: ſome men's ſins are open, and obvious, and evident, before ever they be brought under any cenſure: others they follow after; they are not reformed by any cenſure.

4. Conſideration is, that thoſe who, through grace, have a Chriſtian walk, they have the *happieſt life* of it, as well as the holieſt: hence ſays Chriſt to his diſciples, John xiii. 17. *If you know theſe things, happy are ye if do them.* And Pſal. cxix. 1. *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.* A Chriſtian walk, indeed, is not the meritorious or procuring cauſe of this happineſs; but it is the character, property, and quality of happy men: bleſſings, both ſpiritual and temporal, are entailed upon ſuch; yea, it is only ſuch who have a well-grounded, well-ſettled hope of heaven: and hence this walk, and this hope, are joined together, Tit. ii. 11, 12. *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared*

appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world; looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Here they are knit and buckled together; and if this buckle be looſed, the man will have little hope: hence if a profeſſor drink drunk, and ſwear, and lie, and whore, and cheat, he cannot have the hope of heaven in ſuch a courſe; for, ſuch folk do not anſwer Chriſt's deſign in the goſpel; *to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* For, though good works, and a Chriſtian walk, be not the ground of the man's hope, (for that alone is Chriſt and his righteouſneſs,) yet it is the garment wherewith true hope is adorned, and by which it is known; and therefore, *he that hath this hope, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure,* 1 John iii. 3.

5. Conſideration I offer is, that this Chriſtian walk is *many ways preſſed and urged in ſcripture:* it is both commanded and commended; and there are both threatenings and promiſes relating to it.—The Lord doth *command* it, ſaying, *Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,* Eph. iv. 1. Believers in Chriſt are expreſly commanded in this, *as they have received Chriſt, ſo to walk in him.* And we may ſee the Lord commanding this very walk in his own name and authority, Jer. vi. 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls.* —The Lord not only commands it, but *commends* it. Thus was Noah commended, Gen. vii. 1. *Come thou, and thy houſe into the ark, for thee have I found righteous before me in this generation.* Thus was Enoch commended; for, *by faith he walked with God, and was not, for God took him; and before his tranſlation he had this teſtimony, that he pleaſed God.* And indeed all that thus walk, ſhall be thus tranſlated; though not corporally at the firſt, as he was. The body, like Elijah's mantle, ſtays a little while behind, to be locked up in a cabinet of duſt, while the ſoul is tranſlated at death, to be with God: What is that? never to ſin more; never to ſorrow more; always praiſing God; always rejoicing in him;

him; and preſſed down with nothing but a weight of glory. Thus it ſhall be with all who walk in Chriſt: for they are *made meet for this inheritance of the ſaints in light*. Others are not fit for heaven, and ſo could not dwell in it. But I was ſaying, that God commends this walk; and to give all the inſtances of commendation, that he gives this way, would lead me to enlarge too far.—There are *threatenings* relating to this walk. God threatens to bring ſad ſtroaks upon ſuch as are ſtrangers to this Chriſtian walk; Lev. xxvi. 27. *If ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary to you alſo in fury; and puniſh you ſeven times more for your ſins.* Yea, if God's own children ſtep aſide, and take not heed to their walk, they ſhall ſmart for it: though he *take not his loving-kindneſs from them*, yet, if they *break his laws, and walk not in his commandments, he will viſit their tranſgreſſions with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes*, Pſal. lxxxix. 30,—33.—Again, there are *promiſes* relating to this walk. There are promiſes of it, and to it. Promiſes *of* it, like that, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes:* And indeed none would walk ſo much as a right ſtep, without the Spirit to guide them. Then there are promiſes *to* it; hence *godlineſs* is ſaid to be *great gain, having the promiſes of this life, and that which is to come.* This Chriſtian walk hath promiſes, not in the way of the firſt covenant, when the promiſe was made to works itſelf; but here it is made to the worker, or walker in Chriſt; or to the walk, as it is an evidence of union to him, *in whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen.*

6. Conſideration I offer is, that this Chriſtian walk hath a *reference to all the duties of religion*, to all the *graces of the Spirit*, and to all the *directions of the word*, which is the rule of this walk.——It hath a reference, I ſay, to all the *duties of religion;* and ſo they cannot walk in Chriſt, who neglect the duty of prayer, the duty of watchfulneſs, the duty of vowing, and paying our vows to the Lord, as David, Pſal. cxvi. 9, 14. compared.—It hath a reference to all the *graces of the Spirit.* Chriſt is the way that the believer walks in: but, as

in

in a high way, there are ſeveral foot roads, ſome on this ſide, and ſome on that ſide of the way, which a perſon may conveniently walk in, and yet never go off from the high way: ſo here, the ſeveral graces of the Spirit are like ſo many branches of the way and road, for believers to walk in, ſo many little walks by the way-ſide.—There is the walk of *faith*, which we are daily to ſtep into, acting faith on Chriſt's righteouſneſs, for acceptance; acting upon his ſtrength for aſſiſtance; acting upon his fulneſs, for ſupply; acting upon him for grace, to kill ſin and to quicken the ſoul; and acting upon him for glory, and for another life to come. —There is the walk of *repentance:* while the ſoul looks to him whom it pierced, and mourns. O Sirs, when the ſoul looks to Chriſt crucified, it ſees more of the curſed nature of ſin, and more of the curſed deſert of ſin, than it is capable to expreſs. He that was infinitely pleaſed with his Son, could not but be infinitely diſpleaſed with ſin, that made him to bruiſe him, till he melted under the burden of theſe fiery mountains of wrath, that were heaped upon him: *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him.*—There is the walk of *love*, Eph. v. 2. *Walk in love, as Chriſt alſo loved us, and hath given himſelf for us; an offering, and a ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour.* O! here is a pleaſant walk: *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16. Many walk in doubts and fears; but if we were more in the ſweet element of love, we would doubt leſs; for, ver. 18. *There is no fear in love; but perfect love caſteth out fear; becauſe fear hath torment: he that feareth is not made perfect in love.* And if we were more in this happy region of love to God, we would be more in love to one another.—There is the walk of *joy*, that the believer ſhould be ſtepping into; *Rejoicing in Chriſt Jeſus; Rejoicing evermore.* This joy is not only a privilege but a duty: not only a part of our happineſs, but a part of our holineſs; a part of this walk; a commanded duty. This *joy of the Lord* is the *ſtrength of the ſoul:* and this walk, in holy joy, is not inconſiſtent, with a walking in holy fear; they are both put together, Acts ix. 31. *Walking in the fear*

of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt, they were multiplied. Is the believer married to Chriſt, and ſhould he not delight in his Huſband? He delights in them, and ſhould they not delight in him? Believers ſhould mourn all their lives for ſin, and yet rejoice all their life in Chriſt: *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full*, John xv. 11. It is Chriſt's joy to ſee his people rejoicing in him; in his love, in his death, in his reſurrection and interceſſion, in his fulneſs and righteouſneſs, in his merit and Spirit: for this holy and ſpiritual walk is from the Spirit, as the principle; in the Spirit, as the mover; and after the Spirit, as the guide.—But again, this walk, it hath a reference to all the *directions of the word*, as the rule of it. The man that walks in Chriſt, hath a *reſpect to all God's commandments;* and a reſpect to the whole word, as the rule: for, *Whoever walketh according to this rule, peace be on him,* ſaith the apoſtle, *and on all the Iſrael of God.* Oh! how few diſcover a Chriſtian walk, from this very particular, that they are ſo unacquainted with the rule of the Chriſtian walk; ſuch ſtrangers to the Bible! Many caſt the rule of the Bible behind their back. Would ſhe not be counted a whoriſh woman, who had received a letter from her long abſent huſband; and when ſhe had read it, ſhe rent it in pieces, and tread it under her foot? And, indeed, all of you are doing this, while you are ſlighters of the Bible, from Sabbath to Sabbath; and make no conſcience of walking by the rule of the word.

7. The ſeventh conſideration I offer is, that this walk hath a *preference*, beyond all other walks; even the beſt walk of any in the world, that are but pretenders to religion and Chriſtianity. As the worſhippers of the beaſt have the mark of the beaſt: God's children have God's ſeal; 2 Tim. ii. 19. *The foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.* God's ſeal hath a double motto: the one denotes their ſecurity; *The Lord knoweth them that are his:* the other denotes their ſanctity; *They depart from iniquity.* There are many wild flowers in the field, that

bear

bear a reſemblance unto, and look like the flowers in the garden; but are really not the ſame: ſo, many things, at a diſtance, look like ſanctification, and a Chriſtian walk; but at a nearer view are quite different from it.

There is a threefold walk, that looks like a Chriſtian walk, but yet it is not only different from it, but oppoſite to it: and this Chriſtian walk is ſo far beyond it, as heaven is above earth.

(1.) The walk of *civility*, which is nothing elſe but a fair ſhew in the fleſh; rather a heatheniſh ſtrictneſs, than a Chriſtian holineſs. For, mere civility is uſually accompanied with *ignorance of God*, and the *myſteries of his kingdom*. Men may be no drunkards, no ſwearers, no adulterers, no rude debauched perſons; and yet groſly ignorant of ſpiritual matters: ſo Nicodemus, a ruler in Iſrael, a ſtrict Phariſee, a civil man; and yet a mere *ignoramus* in the new birth, John iii. 10. Whereas a Chriſtian walk begins with *knowledge*, and with the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt.* —*Jeſus Chriſt* is uſually *little prized* by civil men: they are ſatisfied with their own righteouſneſs; they do not hunger and thirſt after Chriſt's righteouſneſs. The law is more natural to men than the goſpel; yea, the goſpel is not at all what nature can duly imagine about: therefore, legal ſtrains, and moral maxims, ſuit more with them, than goſpel-doctrine: but, to the Chriſtian, *Chriſt is all in all.*—Some *reigning luſt* uſually keeps company with civility; ſuch as covetouſneſs, for ordinary. The young man in the goſpel, that was a civil honeſt man, a fair dealer in the world; and could ſay, *I have kept all theſe things, from my youth;* ſo he might, as to the letter of them: yet, behold, his poſſeſſions were a ſnare to him; at the narrow bridge of ſelf-denial, Chriſt and his ſoul parted.—In a word, the civilian uſually takes *more care* about his *actions*, than about his *luſts:* he can digeſt all the luſts of wrath, malice, pride, worldly thoughts, and unclean affections; becauſe the converſation ſeems to be ſmooth and fair, theſe crawling vermin ſwarm in the heart without controul: why, civility is all for outward carriage; it minds not the heart. But

the Chriſtian walker complains, even of the *law in his members*, the *ſinful workings of the heart:* his eyes, like the windows of the temple, are broad inward; he looks much within, and mourns over the ſins of the heart, as well as thoſe of the life. But there is,

(2.) The walk of the *Formaliſt*, that hath but a dead form: this Chriſtian walk is vaſtly beyond that. Why? the formaliſt acts from *foreign* conſiderations, motives from without; ſuch as popular applauſe, carnal reſpect, worldly honours, preferments, and the like. Juſt like puppits, that want the natural motion of life within, and are artificially moved by an outward force. The Spirit of God may aſſiſt the hypocrite in ſome duties; but he is not in him as an informing, quickening, renewing principle: but the Spirit is in the believer, like a *living fountain*, natively bullering up; *Out of his belly floweth rivers of living water*, John vii. 37. Formaliſts are *careleſs of God's ſight and preſence;* they can neither appeal to God for their ſincerity; nor live in his preſence, as in the eye of his omniſcience: but their great care is, to blind the world. The Chriſtian can appeal to God, with Peter; *Thou that knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee.* At other times he loaths himſelf, at the ſight of God's glorious majeſty and purity, in the ſenſe of his defects; *Now mine eyes ſeeth thee; therefore, I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and in aſhes.*—— The formaliſt is *proud of his falſe grace;* but the Chriſtian walk is always attended with ſpiritual poverty. The more knowledge the ſaint hath, the more he is ſenſible of his ignorance: the more faith, the more he bewails his unbelief: the more love, the more he blames his heart for want of love. It is a good ſign, when the ſoul is kept hungry and humble, in the ſenſe of its wants, amidſt the height of its enjoyments.

(3.) The walk of the *temporary Chriſtian* ſeemeth excellent; but this true Chriſtian walk hath the preference. —Some hypocrites are under the influence of *reſtraining* grace, chained up by their own fears; but not moved by goſpel-grace, nor reſtrained by love and mercy: this reſtraining grace, where there is no more, never deſtroys ſin; but only diſcharges the acts of it: but

true

true grace ſweetly inclines the heart, to *hate every falſe way*, and *to run the way of God's commandments.*—Other hypocrites are under the influence of *common temporary* grace: this hath a degree of excellency beyond all the former, and yet comes to nothing. It differs from *civility*, becauſe it is more Chriſtian and evangelical. It differs from *formality*, becauſe that is only a ſhew, and this is a real work on the ſoul. It differs from *reſtraining* grace, for that avoids ſin, and performs duty from ſlaviſh fear; but this ſeems to have ſome affection for Chriſt and his word: this a man may have, and yet fall away, like the *ſtony-ground hearers*. This is the neareſt to true grace, and it is called, Heb. vi. 5. an *enlightening*; a *taſte of the heavenly gift*, a *partaking of the Holy Ghoſt*, namely, in his gifts, that are common: but yet the light here ſpoken of, is not humbling; the taſte is not raviſhing; the gifts are not renewing: all that they have puffs them up. The foundations ſink that are not laid deep enough. The true Chriſtian walk doth magnify Chriſt, and debaſe ſelf: this Dagon falls down before the ark. In a word, a formaliſt and hypocrite, or legaliſt, may have the Spirit, and yet not be *born of the Spirit*: he may have the Spirit ſhining on him, like the glancing of the ſun-beams upon a glaſs window: but the ſaint hath the Spirit in him, like a *well of water ſpringing up to everlaſting life*. He enjoys his indwelling preſence and his gracious working; not only in his inferior operation, but in effectual regeneration, and ſpiritual transformation; and ſo the Spirit of adoption, crying, ABBA, *Father*, Gal. vi. 5, 6. But in order to clear this difference further,

8. The laſt conſideration I offer is, that this Chriſtian walk is different from all other *pretenders* to it, eſpecially in its relation to Chriſt. And it hath chiefly a threefold relation to Chriſt. As *of him*, and *through him*, and *to him are all things*: ſo, this walk being a walk in Chriſt, is of him, as the author; through him, as the altar; and to him, as the end: it is of him as the Alpha; through him, as the way of acceptance; and to him, as the Omega: it is of him as the efficient cauſe; through

through him, as the accepting cauſe; and to him, as the final cauſe.

(1.) This Chriſtian walk is *of him* as the ALPHA, the principle, the efficient cauſe: *I live*, ſays Paul; *yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.* Every ſtep of this walk is an act of the ſoul, made alive unto God through Chriſt, and his quickening it by the ſupereminent influences of the Spirit of Chriſt, *without whom we can do nothing.* We have neither life nor legs to walk without Chriſt: it is *he that worketh in us, both to will and to do.* It is he that *giveth power to the faint, and increaſeth ſtrength to them that have no might.* Then they *run without wearying, and walk without fainting.* The man is able for all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening him: now he ſurmounts all difficulties, which before were inſuperable. Though the ſoul be the formal agent, yet the power and efficiency, by which it acts, is from him: as the ſoul animates the body; ſo Chriſt animates the believer's ſoul in this Chriſtian walk. Here is a myſtery which is but madneſs and melancholy to an ignorant world; and particularly to blind moraliſts.

(2.) This Chriſtian walk is *through him*, as the ALTAR, the mean of acceptance, and the accepting cauſe; for, *we are accepted in the Beloved.* It is in him alone that *God is well pleaſed:* this is the altar on which the gift is to be laid. As the believer draws all his ſtrength from him; ſo he expects all his acceptation through him: no action, no duty is accepted but as perfumed by the merit of his oblation. Though they ſhould be melted down into tears of goſpel-tenderneſs; yet they dare not preſent them to God, for acceptation; but only by Chriſt: they carry back theſe tears to be bathed in his blood; knowing that their ſalt water is of little value with God; expecting only to be accepted upon the value of the blood of the Lamb, and the virtue and efficacy of his interceſſion.

(3.) This Chriſtian walk is *to him*, as the OMEGA, the final cauſe, and the end of it: it is all directed to the praiſe of his grace, and to the glory of God in Chriſt. The very thoughts of robbing God of his glory, and clothing himſelf with the ſpoils of his honour, are ſometimes

times terrible to him: why, he is upon a God-exalting, Chriſt-honouring, and grace-magnifying deſign. This is the very nature of the Chriſtian walk, and that which completes the image of God, when his glory, and the exaltation of his grace, and the manifeſtation of his glorious perfections, is uppermoſt in the man's thoughts, deſires, deſigns, and endeavours. When it is the man's greateſt wiſh on earth, to ſhew forth the glory of his name; and his greateſt errand to heaven, to ſee this glorious object, and be in caſe to extol him up for ever. This is the walk we are called to, and herein it is diſtinguiſhed from all that moraliſts, formaliſts, legaliſts, and hypocrites can attain.——May theſe conſiderations be indeed the matter of your conſideration; and may the Lord acquaint you with this walk; that receiving Chriſt, you may ſo walk in him.

2*dly*, I am to offer ſome *qualities* and *properties* of the way. Having conſidered the walk already, at ſome length, I ſhall now confine myſelf to ſpeak a little of the way: and indeed every property, that I am to offer of this way, that you are to walk in, may be a ſtrong inducement to thoſe that are out of the way, to come to it; and thoſe that come to it, to walk in it. All men are walking in ſome way or other: What is the way moſt part are walking in? Why, they are walking *after the fleſh*, Rom. viii. 1.; walking in *the way of their own heart*, Eccl. ii. 9.; walking *after their own devices*, Jer. xviii. 2.; walking *after vanity*, Jer. ii. 5.; walking after their *own ungodly luſts*: this is far from walking in Chriſt; and yet, this is the walk of the moſt part in the world. The laſcivious man walks in his luſts; the covetous man walks in his wealth, as in his ſtrong tower; the voluptuous man walks in his pleaſures; the hypocrite walks in his formal duties, *&c.* Oh! how few walk in Chriſt! They who do ſo, are a few perſons by themſelves; and of another ſpirit, like Caleb, Numb. xiv. 24. However, this is the walk of true believers; and if they do not walk ſo, they do not act like themſelves: *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.* Chriſt ſays, *I am the way*, John xiv. 6.; and here his apoſtle ſays the ſame: *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus*

ſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him: in him, who is the way, wherein ye are to walk. And now, to ſhew what ſort of a way this is, we need not be at a loſs, if we were under the conduct of the word and Spirit of Chriſt, who is the way. There are theſe ten qualities and properties of this way, wherein you are to walk: all the conveniences that the heart of man can conceive or deviſe; all the accommodations, that may either gain people to this way, or refreſh people that are in this way: and therefore apply it ſtill, as we go along, by way of motive to quicken you to ſet footing in this way, if you be out of it, and to make progreſs therein, if you be in it.

1. One property is, that it is a *free* way for all comers to enter into, and for all intrants to walk in.——It is free for all *comers* to enter into. It is a way barred up to no perſon whatſoever; a way whoſe gates are caſt off from the hinges: *Whoever will may come* freely to it; *without money and without price.* There are ſome ways, ſome bridges over certain rivers, which we cannot be allowed to paſs without paying ſome little money, for defraying the charges of the building, or ſupport thereof: but here is a way, a bridge, built over the ocean of God's wrath; a way for ſinners to get to God. And, indeed, it is a coſtly way, built at the greateſt expence that God and Chriſt could be at, yet free to us; nothing to pay for the paſſage.--It was indeed, a coſtly way to the *Father*, and coſt him his own Son; not ſo as to loſe him for ever, but ſo as to kill him for a time. Though a man do not loſe his child; yet it goes to his heart to ſee his child tormented; much more when he himſelf is forced to be the tormentor. Chriſt was the Father's *beloved Son, the delight of his boſom;* yet, *it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him:* he not only beheld the tragedy that was acted upon him by man, but allowed the ſuffering; yea, and was the chief actor of it himſelf: it pleaſed him to bring about the ſalvation of ſinners this way.—It was coſtly to *Chriſt;* he parted with the glory of his divinity, for a while, though not with the eſſence of it: and though he was *King of kings*, underwent the notion of a beggar, and *took upon him the form of a ſervant;* yea, and *died the curſed death of the croſs.* But yet it is a free

a free way to us, without any coſt or charge: Chriſt is freely given of the Father, to be the ſinner's way to him; and it is by way of abſolute free gift; *I will give thee for a covenant of the people. Not for our ſake doth he it, but for his own name's ſake:* in ſo much that the greateſt of ſinners may freely enter into this way; *By grace ye are ſaved through faith, and that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God.* If any thing was to be done on our part, to partake of Chriſt, we might have whereof to boaſt; Rom. iv. 2. *If Abraham was juſtified by works, he had whereof to glory:* therefore God gives Chriſt freely, without any conſideration in us, to move him thereto; yea, contrary to all the evil in us, that might move him to deny Chriſt unto us; and all to the praiſe of the glory of his grace; that we may come boldly to this throne of grace. If this way of acceſs to God was not free, we could not come boldly. If God ſhewed a regard to any previous good in us, it would mar our boldneſs; but, *we have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt;* not by his blood and our actions, but only *by his blood.* If a man hath a mind to ſtep into the king's high-way, out of his houſe, which is the ſubject's privilege, no man can ſay to him, you treſpaſs in ſo doing; it is made to be common for all: ſo Chriſt is a free common good; a common way to all ſorts of perſons whatſoever, to whom there is a heart given to ſtep into the way. Chriſt allows all ſorts of ſinners to come to him and enter into this way: but he allows none to live in ſin, that have come to him; nay, he purges out their ſin. Let none take it amiſs that we ſay, the vileſt of ſinners are freely welcome to this way, that they may walk in it; and then ſurely they will walk at another rate, than they have done: in this ſenſe it is that Chriſt ſays, *Publicans and harlots may enter into the kingdom of heaven, before the ſelf-righteous Phariſees,* Mat. xxi. 31. Men's thoughts run another ſtrange way: if I have little holineſs and righteouſneſs, then the man thinks, now I may, in regard of that holineſs and righteouſneſs, without preſumption, cloſe with Chriſt: why, this is to overthrow the goſpel of the grace of God in Chriſt; who ſays, that *he came to ſave that which was loſt;* and came *not to call the righteous, but ſinners.*

It is a free way for all comers to enter into.——And it is free for all that have *entered* into it to walk in, and to walk freely. Walking is a voluntary motion, and the regenerate ſoul walks freely, without force or compulſion, or a baſe mercenary ſpirit; *The love of Chriſt conſtrains him:* love is a golden weight that hangs upon the ſoul, and makes every wheel of it to move. Chriſt is ſuch a free way, as makes all his people volunteers in his ſervice; *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* It is their choice, their delight, their option: *I have choſen the way of truth*, Pſal. cxix. 3.

2. Another property is, it is a *ſafe* way to walk in; and ſo as there is here the freeſt walking, ſo there is here the ſafeſt walking; hence it is ſaid of the man that walketh in this way, Iſa. xxxiii. 16. *He ſhall dwell on high, the place of his defence ſhall be the munition of rocks.* In this way the man is ſo ſafe that he neads fear no evil. O how ſweetly do thy walk, who can ſing the twenty-third Pſalm in the very view of death! *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet will I fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me.* There is the greateſt ſecurity in this way; *He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely. He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhade of the Almighty*, Pſal. xci. 1. Let a man take any other way in the world to heaven, but Chriſt, and there are a thouſand dangers in it, and hazards of miſcarrying: but let a man take this way, and walk in it, and *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt him.* It is ſaid of this way, Iſa. xxxv. 9. *No lion ſhall be there, nor any ravenous beaſt ſhall be found there: but the redeemed of the Lord ſhall walk there.* Thoſe that keep cloſs to this way, they keep out of the reach of Satan, the roaring lion; that wicked one toucheth them not. It is true, they are the objects of his greateſt ſpite: but they are out of his reach; he can do them no real hurt, while they keep cloſs in this way. They that walk in their luſts, and in ſin, they are in Satan's way, and he hath them at his will: this is the way to hell. They that are walking in their own righteouſneſs, as their way to heaven, Satan hath continual advantage againſt them; becauſe there

there is ſo much ſin in all their righteouſneſs, and ſo much of the devil in all their goodneſs, they are not out of the reach of the lion: but there is no lion in the way, Chriſt. It is a ſafe way to walk in, you cannot be ſafe in any other way, that hath ſalvation at the end of it; for it leads to eternal glory and eternal happineſs; Heb. xii. 1, 2. *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and run with patience the race ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right-hand of the throne of God.* Other ways lead to hell, this takes to heaven; for the promiſe is made to this way, and to the walkers in it; for, *all the promiſes are in Chriſt Yea and Amen.* And thoſe that *live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, have the promiſes of this life, and of that which is to come.*

3. The *third* property is, it is a *lightſome* way to walk in; for there is much light in this way: hence ſays the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 8, 9. *When I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord will be a light unto me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I ſhall behold his righteouſneſs.* Pſal. cxix. 130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth underſtanding to the ſimple.* It diſcovers ſin to be ſin, and duty to be duty. *It is a pleaſant thing*, ſays Solomon, *for the eye to behold the ſun;* and, Oh! it is a heavy thing for a traveller to be benighted and overtaken with darkneſs! And hence the ſummer ſeaſons are the beſt ſeaſons for travellers in the way, becauſe it is lightſome. Now, Sirs, all other ways but this are darkneſs: Chriſt is the light of the world; John viii. 12. *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life.* The light of knowledge, in oppoſition to the darkneſs of ignorance and error, is in this way; for he that is the way, teacheth all the travellers, according to his promiſe; *They ſhall all be taught of God:* never a ſchoolmaſter in the world, can teach the perfect trade of walking uprightly, but Chriſt, the God-man: they are all but unſkilful, that are not taught of him, and by his Spirit as a *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.* We that are miniſters, we leave

you all but unpoliſhed dunces in Chriſtianity, till the Lord himſelf come in to that miniſtry; and, by his Spirit, teach your ſpirits: and then, when he comes, he can make you wiſer than your teachers. Again,

4. The *fourth* property is, it is a *firm* and *ſolid* way to walk in; there is no fear of ſinking, while we keep this cauſeway, this road. Gluts of rain make ſome mirey boggy ways ſinking, to both men and horſes. But here is a way that is a firm rock; all the rain that falls upon it runs away; it is a *ſure foundation:* it is firm in the fouleſt as well as in the faireſt weather. Chriſt is a way that will deceive none, that walk in him: ſome ways will look well enough to the eye, and yet deceive people: ſome places will look as green and fair, as any other parts of ſolid ground; and yet they are ſuch quagmires and bogs, that men and horſes will ſink to the neck therein: even ſo, there is a way of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and legal obedience, that ſeems to be a fair green way, that promiſes firmneſs; but he that walks there will himſelf ſink; and if Chriſt come not to pluck him out, he will ſink over head and ears. Paul durſt not be found in that way of his own righteouſneſs but looked upon it as *dung*, Phil. iii. 8, 9. Now, you know, dung makes both a ſtinking way, and a ſinking way: even ſo, when men go *about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, for juſtification, and ſo the way to the Father, it ſmells in the divine noſtrils, as dung: and not only ſo, but, as it is unacceptable to God, ſo it is unprofitable to us, in point of acceptance; for, it is a ſinking way: we cannot keep firm footing upon it, but ſink in it: but Chriſt is ſuch a firm way to walk in, that you cannot ſink therein; for, he *upholds with the right hand of his righteouſneſs*. The way of ſin is a ſinking way; the man will ſink to hell that walks in it: the way of ſelf-righteouſneſs alſo is a ſlippery way; all the righteouſneſs of man is not able to uphold him; for the ſin that is in his righteouſneſs, is enough to trip up his heels, and lay him in the mire, and overthrow him. But the man walks firmly that walks and builds upon a rock. Though they that walk in Chriſt, are not free of the filthineſs of ſin altogether; but as water falling upon a rocky way, glides as faſt

as

as it falls, the way being as hard as before the rain; ſo, though *the Lord hath laid on Chriſt the iniquity of us all*, and the believer's ſin falls ſtill upon Chriſt; yet he paſſed away all this iniquity from himſelf, by making full ſatisfaction: if Chriſt ſhould have our ſin remaining on him, he himſelf would be a ſinking way to us: if Chriſt was ſinful in the eyes of God, we could never be clean in his eye; but when ſin was laid upon Chriſt, how did he ſweat it out, when *he trode the wine-preſs alone!* Again,

5. The *fifth* property is, that it is a *high* and *honourable* way; Iſa. xxxv. 8. *An high way ſhall be there, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not paſs over it, but it ſhall be for thoſe: the way-faring man, though a fool, ſhall not err therein.* It is an *high* and *honourable* way: if you walk in this way, you may debate with any man, in point of honour; for therein you have *fellowſhip with the Father, and with the Son.* They that walk in this way, they *dwell on high;* for it is the way of God: it is the king's high-way, the way of the King of kings; *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtraight*, Matth. iii. 3.—It is the way of *holineſs*, that makes it an honourable way alſo, of which God ſays, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God.* Indeed, none can walk in holineſs that do not walk in Chriſt; and none ſhall aſcend to heaven, that are not ſanctified in Chriſt. There is no man or woman, no king or queen, no lord or lady, no rich or poor perſon in the world; no magiſtrate or ſubject, no miniſter or people, ſhall get to heaven without holineſs, or being *ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Cor. i. 2.—It is high and honourable as it is the path of *righteouſneſs; he leadeth me in the paths of righteouſneſs for his own name's ſake*, Pſal. xxiii. 3. And ſo it is the way everlaſting; Pſalm cxxxix. 25, *See if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting;* i. e. the way that is everlaſtingly true, everlaſtingly good, everlaſtingly holy, everlaſtingly pleaſing to God, and profitable to man, and ends in everlaſting life. It is an high way; a way by itſelf, and diſtinguiſhed from the ways of the world; for, it is a way of ſeparation from, and non-conformity to this world.

—*The*

—*The unclean ſhall not paſs over it;* that is, the unregenerate, either to defile the way, or diſturb thoſe that walk there; and they that walk in it, ſhall be *undefilled in the way;* and ſhall more and more *eſcape the pollutions that are in the world*: Why? *there is a river* that runs along this way, *the ſtreams whereof* not only *make glad*, but make clean, *the city of God;* the river of the blood of Chriſt, the river of the influences of the Spirit: by theſe they are cleanſed from all ſin.—Thus it is in every reſpect an high, holy, and honourable way. Again,

6. The *ſixth* property of this way is, it is an *eaſy* way; *My yoke is eaſy*, ſays Chriſt: and ſaith the prophet here of this way, *The way-faring man, though a fool, ſhall not err therein;* though of a weak capacity in other things, he ſhall have ſuch plain directions from the word and Spirit, that he ſhall not err therein: not that they ſhall be infallible, and commit no miſtake; but they ſhall not be guilty of any fatal miſcarriage; nor ſo miſs their way, but that they ſhall recover it again, through grace, and get well to their journey's end. This way is eaſy to hit; *Knowledge is eaſy to him that underſtandeth*, ſaith Solomon: to nature it is a moſt difficult way indeed; but, through grace, it is a moſt eaſy way, and ſuch a way as wherein a man cannot be loſt. In the way of the covenant of works, a man may preſently loſe himſelf: there is not one work he doth, but he commits ſin in it, and ſo he preſently ſteps aſide; and having thus loſt himſelf, he muſt begin again, go about, and come where he was at the firſt: when all is done, it is as good as if it had been undone; for the law is not ſatisfied with any thing leſs than perfection: and this perfection of righteouſneſs, we can only have in Chriſt. —But further, there are theſe four things, that make this way an eaſy way to walk in.

(1.) It is an eaſy way in point of *clearneſs;* Chriſt maketh every thing clear, to the man that comes into this way; for, the anointing which they receive, teaches them all things: he maketh himſelf evident to them, and *giveth underſtanding to the ſimple;* in ſo much, that *the way-faring man, though a fool, ſhall not err;* the

the Spirit of truth leadeth them into all truth, that is neceſſary for them: the goſpel makes the ſimple wiſe.

(2.) It is an eaſy way in point of *nearneſs;* they that walk in Chriſt have a ſhort-cut to the Father; *No man cometh to the Father but by me.* Others ways are like the crooked bow, but Chriſt is the even ſtring: all other ways are compaſſes about; yea, they are labyrinths in which men loſe themſelves. How near a way Chriſt is you have account, Rom. x. 6, 7, 8. *Say not, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? Or, who ſhall deſcend into the deep? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* The way to heaven is nigh; there is but one ſtep to it, as it were, and that is to ſtep in to Chriſt, and remain there; *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved.* The old way of the law of works is a long way; for, *Curſed is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* If a man will run an hundred miles for money, which he may have juſt at his door, and but one ſtep to it, ſure his journey is vain: ſo it is here, Chriſt hath grace and ſalvation, and all in him, and he lays them down at our door; and what need all this travel with reſpect to legal working? Here is a near way.

But here a queſtion may be propounded, *Will not this diſcourage men to work, or to do good works?* To which we might reply, Indeed it may diſcourage ſelfiſh men, that work for themſelves, and for their own juſtification and acceptance; which is a work that God rejects: a ſervice of ſelfiſhneſs may be diſcouraged by this goſpel-doctrine; but the ſervice of thankfulneſs, which is the only true ſervice, and is more cordial and ſedulous than all the mercenary work in the world; this ſervice will be furthered and encouraged thereby. True ſervice to God in Chriſt, is not a ſerving him ſlaviſhly, to purchaſe ſalvation from him; but a ſerving of him thankfully, to glorify him who hath brought ſalvation to us.—Thus it is an eaſy way in point of nearneſs: a great deal of labour and toil is ſaved.

(3.) It is an *eaſy* way in point of *readineſs* and *diſpatch* of buſineſs therein: whoſoever chooſeth Chriſt for a way to walk in, comes to a very quick diſpatch of all the

the buſineſs of holineſs, ſanctification, and mortification, which they are to do, while they are in the way; for Chriſt, whom the believer chooſeth for his way, anoints the wheels of their ſoul, and puts them into a nimble motion; 1 Pet. ii. 3. *To whom coming as to a living ſtone, ye as lively ſtones are built up.* Chriſt, being the living ſtone, makes every one that cometh to him living; yea, and lively too: and we ſay a man is a lively man, that is quick in buſineſs. Why? Chriſt is their ſtrength: he is the ſtrong arm that draws the bow, and the ſtronger the arm is that draws the bow; the ſwifter is the flight of the arrow, and the further it flys. Chriſt is the living principle within that makes them lively; *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.* The larger that the root of the tree is, the more ſap doth it gather, and the more fruit doth it bring forth: Chriſt is the large root, where he is once received, and ſo there are anſwerable ſpirits and ſap coming from him; there will be a *bringing forth of much fruit:* hence believers are ſaid, to be *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*: there is the believer's ſtock. A poor maid ſervant, or widow, can do little for themſelves in the world; why? becauſe their ſtock does not reach far: but if married to a rich man, then they could do much, becauſe they are intereſted in a large ſtock: ſo, when a perſon is married to Chriſt, that before was poor, he is now intereſted in a rich ſtock; for, *in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge:* and when there is ſuch a great ſtock to trade upon, there may be a great deal of work done with much diſpatch; *I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening me; yea, when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.*

(4.) It is an *eaſy* way in point of *largeneſs;* for it is a ſpacious way, wherein there is abundance of room and liberty: *If the Son make you free, then are ye free indeed.* It is true, it is ſaid, *Strait is the way:* and it is ſtrait, not only becauſe of the ſtrictneſs and exactneſs that is required, while the way will allow no toleration for ſin; but alſo that it is a way, that allows no room to any thing elſe but Chriſt: there is no room for a man's own righteouſneſs for juſtification jointly, together with Chriſt:

Chriſt: but now Chriſt, conſidered in himſelf, is a large and ſpacious way, both in reſpect of the number that are allowed to come into this way, and the liberty and freedom he allows them that walk in him; they walk at liberty. There is a manifold bondage in every other way; bondage to ſin, Satan, death, hell, wrath, and to the law as a covenant of works. In a word, other ways are crooked, but this is a ſtreight even way.

7. The *ſeventh* property is, that it is the *good old way;* Jer. vi. 16. *Stand ye in the ways and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls.* This way you are to walk in; it is not a new up-ſtart way, but the old beaten way, in which all the patriarchs and prophets have walked: we are to conſult the pureſt antiquity; to aſk for the path that Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob have travelled in, and all the ſaints theſe five thouſand years, and more. *Aſk for the old path; where is the good way:* we muſt not be guided purely by antiquity, as if that plea was ſufficient to juſtify our path; no, by no means: there is an *old way, which wicked men have trodden,* Job xxii. 15. But when we aſk for the *old way,* it is to be for the *good* old way. The goſpel is no new ſcheme: Chriſt is an old way in four reſpects.

(1.) It is an old way in reſpect of the *contrivance* of it; it is no new invention, but as old as eternity: Chriſt is *the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world;* that is, from eternity: he was *ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* God's way of ſaving ſinners by Chriſt, is *according to his eternal purpoſe, which he purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, before the foundation of the world was laid,* Eph. iii. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9.

(2.) It is an old way in reſpect of the *revelation* of it; for it was revealed immediately upon the back of the fall: *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.*—Adam knew this way; and *Abraham ſaw Chriſt's day,* and Chriſt was before him; *Before Abraham was, I am.*

(3.) It is an old way in reſpect of the *uſe* and *improvement* of it: it is not of late uſe; it is long ſince the ſaints

began to walk in it. There was never another way to heaven, ſince the covenant of works was broken and violate; and all that have walked to heaven ſince the beginning of the world by faith, they walked in this way, Heb. xi. And ſo,

(4.) It is an old way in reſpect that it was the *old-teſtament* as well as the new-teſtament way. The old-teſtament church had the ſame faith and hope in Chriſt, that the new-teſtament church have: only with this difference, their faith was to look forward, and our faith is to look backward: they upon a Meſſiah to come, and we upon a Meſſiah that is come. It is the good old way.

8. The *eight* property is, that it is the *new* and *living* way; *Having boldneſs to enter into the holieſt of all by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way*, Heb. ix. 19. But here two queſtions may be propoſed.

QUEST. 1. *Why called a* NEW *way?*

ANSW. (1.) It is called a *new* way, becauſe it is come *after* the old way of the covenant of works. God never deſigned to bring one man to heaven, by that old-covenant of works: he erected that ſcaffold for a little while, that the glory of the new-covenant might be diſplayed. The condition of that covenant was perfect, perſonal obedience, upon pain of eternal death; and now, by ſin, this bridge is quite broken down; yet, ſuch is the folly of a blind world, that they labour to build up that bridge again; but it is rotten, and will never bear us over.

2. A *new* way in reſpect of the *new, clear, goſpel-revelation* thereof now under the New-Teſtament: for, under the Old, *the way into the holieſt was not yet made manifeſt*, Heb. ix. 8. The brighteſt revelations of Chriſt, under the Old Teſtament, were in theſe or the like words; that he was to be the *ſeed of the woman*, the *ſon of David*, a *prophet like unto Moſes*, a *child born*, whoſe name ſhould be *Wonderful Counſellor:* but what are all theſe to that one bright word of the Baptiſt's, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſin of the world?* And therefore, John the Baptiſt is called *greater than all the old-teſtament prophets;* and yet the *leaſt in the*

kingdom of heaven, is greater than he, that can ſay, with the apoſtle, *We have ſeen with our eyes, heard with our ears, and handled with our hands the word of life;* and can preach a crucified, dead, buried, riſen, exalted, and glorified Chriſt, that hath brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs: hereupon it was ſaid, *Bleſſed are your eyes for they ſee*, even what the old-teſtament ſaints longed to ſee, and never ſaw, except one, who was the happieſt of the old-teſtament ſaints, *viz.* old Simeon; he was both an old-teſtament and a new-teſtament ſaint: he got it revealed to him, that *he ſhould not ſee death, till he had ſeen the Lord's Chriſt.* Again, they had but types of Chriſt, and *the ſhadows of things to come; but the body is of Chriſt.* What a great difference is there between a prieſt's cutting a lamb's throat, and Chriſt *giving himſelf a ſacrifice!* Therefore it is called a new way.

(3.) It is *new*, becauſe it is *always* new. The blood of Chriſt is but newly ſhed, as it were; and there is no abatement of the virtue of his death: his blood is as warm, and cries as loud this day, as the day it was ſhed: yea, it is always new, ſo as it never gives place to another way; there will never be another way to heaven: and we need to take heed how we improve this; for, if *we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth*, in rejecting this way, *there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin*, Heb. x. 36.: That is, God will never provide another way, to the end of the world, but this one way.

(4.) It is a *new* way, becauſe it is *well prepared*, as new ways uſe to be, and we may walk confidently and comfortably in it; for it is ſuch a well-prepared way, that one can hardly ſet his foot in this way, to walk in it, but he is almoſt at the end of the way; becauſe, *He that hath the Son hath life.* We receive eternal life, by receiving of Chriſt: not the full enjoyment of it, but a right to it, and an earneſt of it. When a man ſees Chriſt, he ſees heaven; *Thoſe eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off*, Iſa. xxxiii. 17. When a man ſees him, he ſees the land afar off; in re-

gard, none can take a believing look of Chriſt, but he muſt ſee heaven, and ſalvation in his face. But,

QUEST. 2. *Why called the* LIVING *way?*

ANS. (1.) It is called a *living* way, becauſe there was *life in his death:* the life of reconciliation; *We have peace by the blood of his croſs;* for here he ſatisfied juſtice, fulfilled the law-demands, and expiated ſin, which was the ground of the quarrel.

(2.) A *living* way, becauſe he is the *life of the world;* and all that are in this way live; and no man can die in this way: no traveller upon it can die; *He that believeth in me, ſhall never die.* When bodily death comes, they but *ſleep in Jeſus,* who is the *reſurrection and the life.*

(3.) A *living* way, becauſe he *lives for ever* to be the way. Eternal life is one of Chriſt's names; *This is the true God, and eternal life,* 1 John v. 20. *He ever liveth to make interceſſion for us,* Heb. vii. 25.

(4.) A *living* way, becauſe travellers *muſt live* upon this way: the traveller lives as ſoon as he is in it, and he lives as long as he is in it, and he lives upon it: all his fare is Chriſt himſelf; *whoſe fleſh is meat indeed, and whoſe blood is drink indeed.* If the traveller be faint and hungry, he hath nothing ado but to fall upon Chriſt, by faith, and live upon him; *The life that I live, is by faith on the Son of God.* Never deſire better entertainment for a child of God, than more of Chriſt, more of his grace, more of his fulneſs, more of his Spirit, more of the ſap and virtue of a crucified Jeſus.

9. The *ninth* property is, that it is a *conſecrated* way; Heb. x. 19, 20. *Having therefore, brethren, boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way which he hath conſecrated for us;* that is, dedicated to be the way. Now, Chriſt is conſecrated,

[1.] By the FATHER, to be the way in which we are to walk. (1.) He is conſecrated by the *oath* of God; *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedeck,* Pſal. cx. 4. Heb. vii. 28. *For the law maketh men high-prieſts which have infirmity, but the word of the oath which was ſince the law, maketh the Son, who is conſecrated for ever-*

more.

more. By the oath of JEHOVAH he is appointed to be the only way to bring ſinners to glory. (2.) He is conſecrated by the *preparing him a body;* Heb. x. 5. *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me.* (3.) By the Father's *commiſſion* and *charge* that he gave him about the work of redemption, to ſuffer in that body or human nature; *This commandment have I received of my Father,* John x. 17. (4.) By the *holy anointing;* Pſal. xlv. 7. *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt wickedneſs; therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.* (5.) By getting all *power* and *judgment* committed to him; *For as the Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even ſo the Son quickeneth whom he will,* John v. 21, 22. *As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him,* John xvii. 2.

[2.] Chriſt did conſecrate HIMSELF to be the way for ſinners to walk in to heaven. (1.) By willingly *complying with the Father's will;* Pſal. xl. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God.* A great part of his conſecration lay in his compliance with the divine will; *By the which will we are ſanctified.* (2.) He conſecrate himſelf by his *willing death;* John xvii. 19. *For their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, that they alſo may be ſanctified thro' the truth.* So that *ſanctifying himſelf* is juſt his *conſecrating himſelf;* devoting himſelf to be a ſacrifice for his ſheep. We could never come to that ſanctification by goſpel-devotedneſs to God, unleſs Chriſt had devoted himſelf to death. (3.) He conſecrate himſelf by *diſplaying his authority to ſave,* and declaring *his ability.* For, as *there is no Saviour beſide him,* Hoſ. xiii. 4.; ſo, *he came into the world to ſave ſinners,* 1 Tim. i. 18.: and he *ſhall ſave his people from their ſins,* Matth. i. 21. becauſe *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt,* Heb. vii. 25. (4.) He conſecrate himſelf by the *exerciſe of his office,* in bringing *many ſons to glory:* For *of all that the Father gave him he loſt none,* John xvii. 12.—Thus he is a conſecrated way, and as ſuch we are to walk in him. And, upon the whole,

10. The *tenth* property is, that this way we are to walk in, is a *pleaſant* way, a *comfortable* way: ſurely

wiſdom's

wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs; for Wiſdom itſelf is the way. What more pleaſant than to walk in him, who is light itſelf, pleaſure itſelf?

OBJECT. *But believers are many times oppreſſed, with ſadneſs and heavineſs of ſpirit, though they be in this way.*

ANS. It is only when they turn aſide out of this way, that they are oppreſſed: they walk not in Chriſt as they ought, who rejoice not always in him; for, it is the believer's duty, ſtill to rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus.

OBJECT. *But, ſhould not a believer mourn for ſin?*

ANSW. Yea, indeed; ſurely they ought: but true mourning, goſpel-melting, is not without great pleaſure: there is more pleaſure in goſpel-mourning, than in all the merriment of the wicked. There is much ſecret pleaſure in an evangelically melted heart; for, God deals with believers as he deſires us to deal with our enemies; Prov. xxi. 22. *If thine enemy hunger, give him bread; if thirſty, give him drink: ſo ſhall you heap coals of fire on his head;* q. d. Kindneſs is the beſt way in the world to melt the moſt obdured wretch: thus God deals with his people in Chriſt. They are by nature enemies as well as others: well, he gives them bread when they are hungry; and drink, when they are thirſty: and thus he heaps coals of fire on their head; *i. e.* he melts them. What is true of drunkards and gluttons, in a ſinful ſenſe, that they are never better than when they are in a wine-cellar, and at a banquet, always tippling and drinking, is true of the believer, in a ſpiritual ſenſe: for, the church ſpeaks in this language; *He brought me into his banquetting-houſe:* [or, as it may be read, his CELLAR OF WINE;] *Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples; for I am ſick of love,* Song ii. 4, 5. O the ſoul is no longer ſatisfied than it is with Chriſt! the believer is never better, than when he is in the banquetting-houſe, in Chriſt's wine-cellar; and he cannot get enough, as it were, of this ſpiced wine; *Stay me with flaggons:* it is not with cups, or half cups, but with whole flaggons. There is a holy kind of inebriating, whereby Chriſt doth, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, make the believer, that keeps him company, ſpiritually drunk: he overcomes them with his wine: it is lawful to be drunk

in

in this ſenſe; yea, it is commanded that we take our fill: *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* And again, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs*, ſaith the apoſtle; *but be filled with the Spirit.* Chriſt hath rivers of pleaſures, to ſatisfy his people with, that walk in him.

Here I might tell you of ſix things, that contribute to make this way a pleaſant way; namely, that they that walk in Chriſt, they have in this way, 1. A pleaſant guide. 2. A pleaſant guard. 3. A pleaſant ſhade. 4. Pleaſant company. 5. Pleaſant entertainment. 6. Pleaſant reſt and quiet in the way. This way, as it is, on theſe accounts, pleaſant to them; ſo it is a pleaſant way to God: this way pleaſes God; for, he ſays of Chriſt, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* And walking therein, is what pleaſeth God alſo; hence Enoch, *who walked with God, had this teſtimony, that he pleaſed God.* Well then, this way is, and may be pleaſant to the ſaints, on theſe accounts which I have only named.

1. A pleaſant *guide* they have that walk in this way; *This God is our God for ever and ever; and will be our guide even unto death*, Pſal. xlviii. 14. The Spirit of God is the guide, who not only ſets them into the way, like a friend that leads one a mile out of town, and then leaves him to go alone, no; but he *leads them into all truth*, and *guides by his counſel*, till he bring them to glory, ſaying, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.*

2. A pleaſant *guard* they have that walk in this way. They have a guard of *angels* to ſecure them; *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him: They are miniſtring ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter to the heirs of ſalvation.*—Yea, they have a guard of *divine attributes* about them: *As the mountains are round about Jeruſalem; ſo the Lord is round about them that fear him.* The Lord himſelf holdeth and upholdeth them, with the right-hand of his righteouſneſs. What a pleaſant walk is it to walk in Chriſt's hand, and to be *coming up from the wilderneſs leaning on the Beloved!*

3. A pleaſant *ſhade* they have who walk in this way; for it is a ſhadow way: a ſhadow place in hot weather

is

is comfortable. How pleaſant and comfortable was Jonah's gourd? But what a comfortable ſhadow hath the believer to walk in, or ſit under, when the ſcorching heat of God's wrath breaks out into the world! *A man ſhall be as a covert from the tempeſt, and as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land,* Iſa. xxxii. 2. *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet unto my taſte,* Song ii. 3.

4. Pleaſant *company* they have who walk in this way; for they that walk in Chriſt, they walk with God; and ſurely that is the beſt of company. It is encouraging to a poor traveller, that hath a long journey to go, to hear tell of good company to go with him to his journey's end: here is the choice of company; *Nevertheleſs I am continually with thee,* Pſalm lxxiii. 23.—They have alſo all the ſaints to go along with them, and theſe are *the excellent ones of the earth;* for there is none excellent without grace, be they never ſo great: let them be never ſo great in this world, we muſt not walk with them, when they ſtray from the word of God.

5. Pleaſant *entertainment* alſo they have who walk in this way, and the beſt of refreſhment on their journey; they are fed upon the *green paſtures,* Pſalm xxiii. 3.; and they are fed with the *fineſt of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock,* Pſal. lxxx. 16. They have noble diſhes to feed upon, which others never taſted of: and a well-furniſhed table to ſit down at, far beyond the table of the great kings and monarchs of the world.—There is the diſh of divine *promiſes,* that is ſometimes ſet before them: *Man feeds not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* How ſweet a diſh this is the Pſalmiſt declares when he ſays, *How ſweet are thy words to my mouth!*—There is the diſh of divine *peace;* a *peace that paſſeth all underſtanding;* the peace of God quieting the mind through Chriſt: *Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing ſhall offend them.*—There is the diſh of divine *pardon; I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, for mine own name's ſake, and will remember thy ſins no more. Son, daughter, be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee.*—There is the diſh of divine *manifeſtations,* John xiv. 21. *He that hath my*

good

commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and manifeſt myſelf unto him.—There is the diſh of divine *comforts; In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul.*—There is the diſh of a *good conſcience,* which is a *continual feaſt; This is our rejoicing the teſtimony of a good conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our converſation in the world.* They that walk in Chriſt, they feed upon the rarities of heaven; he makes to them a *feaſt of fat things, and of wines on the lees, well refined.* They have the *white ſtone,* and the *new name, that no man knoweth but he that receiveth it.* The delights in Chriſt are ſuch as none can reach unto, but thoſe that receive Chriſt, and walk in him: therefore Chriſt thanks the Father, ſaying, Matth. xi. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.* He doth not thank him, that he hath revealed them to the mighty, the great, and wiſe, in the world, but to the babes. A babe is the weakeſt of all ſorts of men; and it ſays, that the weakeſt of all believers, that are in Chriſt, the feebleſt babe, ſhall partake of ſuch delicates in Chriſt, as all the world ſhall never be able to dive into, or comprehend: and Chriſt himſelf takes ſuch delight to entertain them, that he bleſſes his Father that he, for his ſake, doth ſo much for them, over and above what he confers upon others.

6. Pleaſant *reſt* and *quiet* alſo have they who walk in this way: they have not only ſuch dainty fare, and delicious entertainment to feed upon, but they have excellent chambers and ornamented appartments to lodge in. A king, and prince, that wants grace, hath not ſuch coſtly hung rooms to quarter in, as they have; nor ſuch well-furniſhed chambers: *The King hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee,* Song i. 4. O the chambers of divine preſence! the ſecret of God's preſence, is agreeable quarters to lodge in! and Chriſt's warm boſom, is a ſweet bed to lie down in! *Our bed is green,* Song i. 16. Chriſt and believers

have but one bed between them; and he covers them with his garment, which is ſo perfumed that it *ſmells of alloes, myrrh, and caſſia, out of the ivory palaces.* And here they are ſure to get reſt in their quarters; Pſal. iv. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace and ſleep; for thou Lord only makeſt me to dwell in ſafety.* Nay, Iſa. xxxii. 18. *My people ſhall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in ſure dwellings, and in quiet reſting-places.* Prov. i. 33. *Whoſo hearkeneth to me, ſhall dwell ſafely, and ſhall be quiet from fear of evil.* And Song i. 7. *He maketh his flocks to reſt at noon.* Thus while they walk in the *good old way*, they *find reſt to their ſouls*, Jer. vi. 16. He warms them with the fire of his grace, and covers them with the rob of his righteouſneſs, and cauſeth them to reſt: he makes their *hearts to burn within them*, and *giveth his Beloved ſleep;* filling them with holy ſecurity in himſelf. And, O what more deſirable to a poor weary traveller, than to be brought to an excellent inn or lodging; than beſide a well-covered table; to get a good fire to ſit at, and a good bed to ly down in!

Now, is Chriſt ſuch a way as I have been deſcribing you are to walk in, and particularly a *living* way? Then, O what a ſweet life is the believer's life, that is a walking in ſuch a way! To be for ever with Chriſt is heaven; our *way*, is walking IN him; our *heaven*, is walking WITH him in white. Oh! what a ſad caſe are they in that walk in the way of death, and deſpiſe this way of life! And, how ſad and diſmal is it, that men *love death rather than life!* It is a mercy that few people do prize, that they have ſinners to preach Chriſt to them: if we had not experience of that rebellion of the natural heart, in ourſelves, we would be mightily impatient in dealing with ungodly perſons. What infatuates men, that they refuſe Chriſt, and will not walk in this way, but in the way of death! What madneſs poſſeſſes the hearts of men, that they will rather go to hell with the devil, than to heaven with Chriſt! Surely they deſerve hell for ever that make ſuch an abominable choice; and yet every natural man doth ſo, every graceleſs man does ſo.

And now, what do ye think of this *pleaſant* way? and how

how ſweetly it is repreſented to us in the word of God? What have you to ſay againſt this way, and the walking in it? Is the way of ſin and the way of ſelf-righteouſneſs, the way of death, comparable to this way? Are your old ſinful courſes better than this way? If you imagine ſo, your own heart, your own tongues will fall upon you, and condemn you at the great day. Is this the beſt way? O then, why will you not take it? And have you taken it, believer, why then will you not walk in it?——May the Lord himſelf commend his Chriſt to you, that you may *receive him*, and *walk in him;* and commend his way to you, that you may walk in it, till you come to glory at the end of it.

SERMON XLVI.

COLOS. ii. 6.

As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.

[The thirteenth Sermon on this text.]

THERE is a twofold garment wherewith Chriſt adorns his people. 1. The garment of imputed righteouſneſs, for their juſtification. 2. The garment of imparted holineſs, for their ſanctification. Without the former, we can have no title to heaven; without the latter, we can have no meetneſs for heaven. Both theſe garments they alone are clothed with, and poſſeſſed of, who, having *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, do walk in him.*—The work of ſanctification and holineſs is the work of God; *I am the Lord that ſanctifieth you*, Lev. xxi. 8. Grace is his own creature; man's will contributes nothing to the work, but by reſiſtance and rebellion againſt it: therefore, God makes the ſoul willing in the day of his power. Outward means work not, unleſs the mighty power of the Spirit work with them;

otherwiſe, why ſhould the ſame word, preached by the ſame miniſter, mollify ſome, and harden others? Nothing but the blood of Chriſt can purge the conſcience from dead works. Chriſt muſt come from heaven and open a fountain, in his own ſide, for our purification and cleanſing. Sanctification is not only expreſſed by a *creation*, Eph. ii. 10. *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works;* but by a *victory*, a powerful overcoming of oppoſition, Luke xi. 21, 22. 1 John iv. 4. In creation, as there was nothing to help, ſo there was nothing to hinder: but when God comes to convert a ſoul, and make him holy, and bring him to a Chriſtian walk, beſides a death in ſin, there is a reſiſtance againſt grace; and, therefore, the grace that is in Chriſt conquers the ſoul, enabling it to receive him; and the ſame grace ſtrengthens to a ſuitable walk in him; out of him it cannot be: for, *without him*, and out of him, *we can do nothing*. And hence we are called to be *ſtrong in him;* and ſo here, to *walk in him: As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him*. I now proceed,

3*dly*, To lay down ſome *motives* and *perſuaſives* to engage to this walk in Chriſt. Now, the *ſcriptural motives*, to engage us to this Chriſtian walk are innumerable: I reduce them to theſe two heads. 1. The conſideration of the *concomitants* of this walk in Chriſt, wherein we may ſee the *excellency* of it. 2. The conſideration of the *effects* of this walk, wherein we may ſee the *neceſſity* of it.

[1.] The conſideration of the *concomitants* of this walk in Chriſt, and ſo therein view the *excellency* of it. There are ſome excellent concomitants and attendants of this walk in Chriſt; eſpecially, what comprehends manifold bleſſed attendants, the Spirit of Chriſt; for there is no walking in Chriſt, but by walking in the Spirit of Chriſt, and ſo it is called, Gal. v. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh*. And ver. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit*. And Rom. viii. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*. This walk in Chriſt then, is attended with the Spirit, in his various graces and operations;

rations; and this ſhould recommend this walk to us. More particularly,

1. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *humiliation*, Eph. i. 17. If the Spirit of ſanctification and holineſs dwelleth in us; the ſame Spirit, as a Spirit of humiliation dwelleth in us. They that walk in Chriſt, they receive the *unction from the holy One, to know all things*, 1 John ii. 20. Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge before converſion; *the god of this world hath blinded him:* but when he is brought to Chriſt, to believe in him, and walk in him, then he is made light in him, *light in the Lord*, Eph. v. 8.; being *turned from darkneſs to light.* Sanctification and illumination are as inſeparable, as light and heat in the ſun-beams.

2. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *ſupplication;* for when he is the *Spirit of grace*, he will be the *Spirit of ſupplication*, Zech. xii. 10. Where he is the Spirit of holineſs, he will be the Spirit of prayer. Every new-born babe comes, for the moſt part, into the world crying; ſurely every ſpiritual new-born babe crys, ABBA, *Father*, Gal. iv. 6. The word, ABBA, ſignifies FATHER, in the Syriac tongue, which the apoſtle here retains; and which alſo young children retain, almoſt in all languages and countries. If you never find the melting, moving, quickening, warming breathings of the Spirit, you do not look like one that walks in Chriſt: but to *pray in the Spirit* is a ſign of tranſlation from death to life; from nature to grace. And herein alſo appeareth the excellency of this walk, it is attended with the Spirit of ſupplication.

3. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *faith;* 2 Cor. iv. 13. *We having the ſame Spirit of faith;* by which the man doth more and more believe that *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, and believe on this Jeſus. By which, on the one hand, he believeth that *Jeſus is the Chriſt:* this was the grand teſt of a believer in the primitive times; becauſe then it was little leſs than death, among the Jews, thus to own and confeſs Chriſt: "Shut your eyes and our ears, [ſays Luther on Pſal. "cxxx.] and ſay, You know no God, out of Chriſt; "none but he that was in the lap of Mary, and ſucked

"her

" her breaſts."— By this faith, on the other hand alſo, we believe on the *name of the Son of God*, and rely upon him for *wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification,* and *redemption;* cleaving to him, drawing daily virtue from him, and laying all our wants and burdens upon him.

4. This holy walk is attended with the Spirit of *repentance* and *humiliation:* this follows the look of faith; *They ſhall look upon him, whom they have pierced, and mourn,* Zech. xii. 10. The man that is walking in this way, and under the conduct of the Spirit, he is always weeping, as he is walking; *Going and weeping, they ſhall aſk the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward,* Jer. l. 45. The man *goes forth weeping, bearing precious ſeed,* Pſal. cxxvi. 6. Being humbled to the duſt, before God, for his ſin and iniquity, he *loaths himſelf, and repents in duſt and aſhes.*

5. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *joy* and *conſolation.* As Chriſt is anointed with the *oil of gladneſs above his fellows;* ſo his children have fellowſhip with him, in this oil of joy. The godly ſorrow and weeping, mentioned juſt now, is not inconſiſtent with this joy and gladneſs: the Spirit of humiliation is not inconſiſtent with the Spirit of conſolation; for, while he mourns before the Lord, he melts; and there is more joy in the believer's melting before the Sun of righteouſneſs, than in all the mirth of the wicked. We may appeal to all believers, who have had their hearts melted before the fire of divine love, whether they have not found a ſecret contentment and ſatisfaction, ſuch as hath made them rather fear the change of that mourning, that to be troubled at it: yea, the man many times weeps for joy, while he ſees the fulneſs and freeneſs of the grace of God toward the like of him.

6. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *power;* 2 Tim. i. 7. *For God hath not given us the Spirit of fear, but of power.* There is the Spirit of power and victory that attends it: 1 John v. 4. *He that is born of God overcometh the world;* namely, the wicked of the world, the luſts of this world, the god of this world, the devil: the ſaints have a war with theſe enemies; but are enabled and prepared according to their meaſure,

to

to ſubdue their corruptions within, and vanquiſh temptions without. The believer gets, in ſome meaſure, above the fears, and frowns, and flatteries of the world; ſo as he cannot be turned from the faith of Chriſt thereby. When ſome perſuaded Eraſmus to write to Luther, or againſt him, at the Reformation, to bring him back to Popery: Eraſmus anſwered, "That Luther was too "great for him to write to, or againſt." So a man that walks in Chriſt, is too great a ſpirit to be turned by the powers of the world; when he is himſelf, he cannot be drawn by force or fraud into a baſe compliance with them againſt the honour of his God, and the conſcience of his duty.

7. This holy Chriſtian walk is attended with the Spirit of *love;* 2 Tim. i. 7. *God hath not given us the Spirit of fear, but of love:* love to God and to the brethren. This love is made a ſpecial effect and evidence of ſpiritual circumciſion, or ſanctification, Deut. xxx. 6. there the Lord promiſes to *circumciſe the heart to love him.* The man loves himſelf, and his relations, and outward enjoyments, with a common love; but he loves God and Chriſt, with a ſpecial love. He loves God with a love of deſire; panting after God with a love of union; *with purpoſe of heart, cleaving to the Lord:* with a love of benevolence, deſiring all praiſe and glory to be aſcribed to him: and with a love of delight and complacency, reſting in the Lord as his only God and portion.—This Spirit works by love to the brethren alſo: there are brethren by name, by nation, by office; but eſpecially by grace, that the man loves: *He that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten.* A ſpirit of hatred and enmity between man and man, is inconſiſtent with this walk; and eſpecially where there is no love to the *excellent ones of the earth.* It is true, a child of God may love ſome of the children of God irregularly, when it is not merely becauſe they have more of the image of God, than others; but becauſe they are more their favourites, followers, and admirers: if they be not ſuch, then they will, perhaps, give them little of their company; but, ſays David, *I am a companion to all them that fear thee.* The apoſtle gives us a teſt of true love to the brethren,

brethren, 1 John iii. 10. *Chriſt laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* A true believer is not only to lay down his life for Chriſt, and for his cauſe and the goſpel, when called thereto; but, in ſome reſpect, for the brotherhood: and though this ſeems to be an high pitch, yet, I think, there is ſomething of it in every true lover of Chriſt: they ſo love the brotherhood as with John, they *deſire to decreaſe*, if ſo be that Chriſt myſtical may *increaſe*; that the kingdom of Chriſt be enlarged, and the generation of the righteous multiplied, amplified, and preſerved; though he himſelf, his name, his honour, his life, ſhould ly in the duſt.

8. This holy Chriſtian walk, or walk in Chriſt, is attended with the Spirit of a *ſound mind*; 2 Tim. i. 7. *God hath not given us the Spirit of fear, but of a ſound mind.* Sanctification is a ſoul reſtoration; *He reſtoreth my ſoul*, Pſalm xxiii. 3. not only to joy and comfort, but to ſinging, health, and vigour. What ſickneſs is to the body, ſin is to the ſoul: a ſick man cannot walk, nor work; ſo here, an ungodly perſon cannot *walk in Chriſt, run the way of his commandments*, nor *work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling.* A ſick man cannot take delight in meat and drink, or the enjoyments of life; ſo, the unholy man cannot take pleaſure in ſpiritual things: but when a man is ſanctified in Chriſt, then he experiences unſpeakable ſatisfaction in ſpiritual exerciſes; he is ſound in the faith, and his heart right with God. It is true, as a man that is healthy may catch cold, and labour under ſome infirmity; ſo, a holy ſpiritually healthy perſon may, through human frailty, and ſtrong temptation, decay in grace for a time; he may get cold, his love and zeal may grow cold, his faith weaken; he may have an inordinate affection to the creature, and immoderate cares; fall into ſin, great ſin: yet the immortal ſeed of God in him will, by the ſupplies of the Spirit of life, revive and corroborate the man again. Grace, like leaven, will ferment the whole lump, and work out the diſeaſe of ſin: the withered principle of grace within, like a tree planted by the river of life, will ſpring, flouriſh, and bud again.

9. This

9. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *adoption* and *liberty*, which are put together, Rom. viii. 15, 21. When a ſinner becomes a ſaint, that very moment a child of wrath becomes a child of God. They that are the children of God by regeneration, are the children of God by adoption; and they that are born of God, are free-born, they are born to a glorious liberty; *If the Son make you free, you are free indeed.* The ſpirit of adoption is a free ſpirit; and *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty:* the man walks at liberty, and is at freedom for prayer and ſervice; *Truly I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed by bonds:* here is *the honour of all the ſaints.* According to the meaſure of ſanctity that is conferred on them, ſuch is the meaſure of liberty and freedom they have in the performance of religious duties.

10. This holy walk in Chriſt is attended with the Spirit of *perſeverance;* for the Spirit of God reſts on them, and never altogether leaves nor forſakes them. True holineſs is an abiding principle; for, *the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure;* and, *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* He that is the *author*, will be *the finiſher of faith:* he that hath begun the good work, will perfect it. See Jer. xxxii. 40. Here God both undertakes for himſelf, that *he will not turn away from them to do them good;* and then for his people, that *he will put his fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from him.* Hence, *though they fall, they ſhall riſe;* though they ſtep aſide into the ways of death, God will bring them back, and give them repentance unto life. Where-ever the image of God is, it is progreſſive: the picture of a man in a frame doth not grow, it is always at a ſtand; but the picture, or image, of a man in his child, is far different; it is lively, vigorous, and progreſſive: ſo the painted holineſs of hypocrites is vaſtly different from the image of God in a ſaint; *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. I give to them eternal life,* ſaith Chriſt, *and they ſhall never periſh.* See Song iv. 16. *Awake, O north-wind, and come thou ſouth: blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out.* Not on-

ly the wind of influences; the north-wind of nipping and convincing influences of the Spirit; and the ſouth-wind of warming and comforting influences of the Spirit: but all the winds of providence; the north-wind of adverſity, the ſouth-wind of proſperity; the north-wind of frowning providence, the ſouth-wind of ſmiling providence; the warm ſummer of joy, or the cold winter of ſorrow; all the gales and blaſts of divine providence, ſhall ſweetly conſpire to open the ſpices of God's garden, to ripen and diffuſe the ſavour of the graces of the Spirit, in the hearts of his people.——Thus you ſee ſome of the *concomitants* of this walk; it is attended with the Spirit of illumination, ſupplication, faith, humiliation, conſolation, power, love, a ſound mind, adoption, perſeverance, *&c.*

[2.] We now come to the conſideration of the *effects* of this walk, wherein we may ſee the *neceſſity* of it. When I ſpoke to this part preceding, I brought in what is above as another property of the way, namely, that it is a *ſpiritual* way; becauſe therein we find the Spirit in all theſe reſpects, as above: and ſo what now follows may be brought in, as the perſuaſive part of this exhortation; the two former parts being inſtructive, and the laſt being directive. What doth immediately follow then, is the perſuaſives and arguments, for further engaging us to walk in this way. There are theſe three motives and perſuaſives to a Chriſtian walk, which comprehend multitudes of other arguments, namely, 1. The glory of God. 2. The advantage of man. 3. The credit of the goſpel.

1*ſt*, The *glory of God* is the grand motive that ſhould perſuade us to this Chriſtian walk: though a Chriſtian walk cannot juſtify us before God, that was never appointed as the deſign of it; for our juſtification is founded only upon the perfect righteouſneſs of God's beloved Son; and to put our imperfect holineſs, wrought in us or by us, in the room thereof, is to rob Chriſt of his title, as the *Lord our righteouſneſs:* but though, I ſay, a Chriſtian walk cannot juſtify us before God, yet it glorifies God before the world. And here is the glory of all the three perſons of the glorious Trinity; the glory

of

of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, require this Chriſtian walk.

(1.) The glory of God the *Father* calls for it, particularly from the hand of believers. Why? becauſe they are *choſen* for this purpoſe; he *chooſed you that you ſhould be holy*, Eph. i. 4.; and, *he chooſe you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. Believers are ordained for this end; *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*, Eph. ii. 10. —They are *called* for this end by the Father; 1 Pet. i. 15. *As he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation.* They are *corrected* by him for this end, that they may be brought to a Chriſtian walk, a holy walk; *This is all the fruit to take away their ſin, and to make them partakers of his holineſs*, Iſa. xxvii. 9. Heb. xii. 10. This is ſweet fruit, that grows upon the ſour tree of affliction: we are threſhed, that our huſks may fly off; tried in the furnace, that the droſs of our luſts may be conſumed. Many times the ſaints get ſuch deep ſpots in their conſciences, and ſtains in their garments, that ſo nothing but the water of the blood of Chriſt will waſh away; as nothing but the ſalt and vinegar of affliction will rub out. God would rather ſee his people in a ſuffering ſtate, than in a ſinful ſtate: he had rather hear them cry, than ſee them filthy; and better, a thouſand times better to be preſerved in brine, than to rot in honey.—Thus I ſay, God chooſes them, calls them, corrects them for this end, that he may ſanctify them, and bring them to this Chriſtian walk, that by it they may glorify their Father that is in heaven: *Herein is my Father glorified*, ſays Chriſt, *that ye bear much fruit.*—We glorify his *holineſs*, when we are *holy, as he is holy.*—We glorify his *mercy*, when we are *merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful.*—We glorify his *righteouſneſs*, when we are righteous as he is righteous. —We glorify his *perfection*, by ſtudying to be *perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect*, Matth. v. 48.—By this walk we glorify his ſovereign *will* and *authority:* for, *this is the will of God, even our ſanctification*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 3. and put honour upon his law, by yielding obedience to, and walking in his commandments:—By this

walk we glorify his *love* and *good-will* to us in Chriſt, while we *walk in love;* and are *followers of God, as dear children*, Eph. v. 12. and ſerve him from a ſenſe of his love.—By this walk we glorify his *faithfulneſs* and *power;* in that this walking in Chriſt imports, as a ſpecial ingredient of it, the faith of his promiſe, and dependence on him for all neceſſary ſupplies of grace; and hence this walk is called a *living by faith*, Rom. i. 17. By faith, believing that God is faithful, and will accompliſh; powerful, and can accompliſh all his promiſes: *Faithful is he that hath promiſed, who alſo will do it.*

Now, an unchriſtian walk diſhonours God in all theſe reſpects: and ſhall not the people of God have a regard to the glory of God? ſhould not all the children of God particularly have a regard to their Father's honour? All grace begins with God the Father; he is the firſt, in order of being; and the firſt, in order of working: and it is the Father that flows out to us, in Chriſt, by the Spirit. Whatſoever good Chriſt hath done for us, or in us; it is done with reſpect to the Father's love and grant; and Chriſt, as Mediator, is the Father's ſervant, his elect, and choſen, Iſa. xlii. 2. And it is the Father that hath *given him power over all fleſh, that he might give eternal life, to as many as the Father hath given him*, John xvii. 2. In the Father's acts of kindneſs, we have the freeſt and pureſt apprehenſions of love: it was the Father that began the buſineſs, and ſent his Son into the world, to accompliſh the work of redemption: the Son, as Mediator, can have an higher motive, than his own love, to wit, his Father's will; but the Father can have no higher motive than his own love. The love of the Father is antecedent to the merit of Chriſt, and to the operation of the Spirit. O then, what ground to glorify the Father as the original author of all holineſs and happineſs, and that by our walking in Chriſt! Again,

(2.) The glory of God the *Son* calls for this Chriſtian walk: as thereby we are to honour the Father, that his choſen be not diſparaged; ſo to honour the Son, that his members be not deformed: head and members

ſhould

ſhould be proportionate to one another. It were monſtrous that Chriſt ſhould have ſuch a ſtrange body, as Nebuchadnezzar's image, which he ſaw in his dream; the *head of gold*, the *breaſt and arms of ſilver*, the *thighs of braſs*, and the *feet of iron and clay*, Dan. ii. 32.: even ſo, it is not for Chriſt's honour, to be head of a monſtrous body. So much as we retain of ſin, ſo much do we diſhonour Chriſt. Chriſt came for this very end, to make his people holy. He came to repair the ruins of the fall: now, by the fall, we loſt not only God's favour, but God's image alſo: therefore, that the plaiſter might be as broad as the ſore; he died, not only to reconcile us, but to ſanctify us; *That he might ſanctify us by his own blood, he ſuffered without the gate*, Heb. xiii. 12. His blood is not only a price to redeem us, but a laver to cleanſe us. Now, by this Chriſtian walk, Chriſt gets the glory of his mediatorial offices.—We glorify his prophetical office, by hearing his voice, receiving his inſtruction, and learning the law from his mouth.—We glorify his prieſtly office, by coming to God through him, ſeeking acceptance only in him.—We glorify his kingly office, by giving up our luſts into his hand, to be ſlain by him; and by an intire and voluntary ſubjection of our ſouls to his government; ſo as not to be *without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt.*—By this Chriſtian walk he gets the glory of his *death* and paſſive obedience; while we live to him that died for us: the glory of his doing, or active obedience; while we make honourable mention thereof, in all our courſe of holineſs, ſaying, *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, even of his only*, Pſalm lxxi. 16. —By this he gets the glory of his work *in us*, as well as *for us*; while we *work out our ſalvation*, in the faith of his working in us, *both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.*—By this walk Chriſt gets the glory of his *purchaſe*; having *purchaſed a peculiar people, zealous of good works*: and having purchaſed grace and glory to that people, ſurely he is glorified then, when theſe graces ſhine in the practice of holineſs.—By this walk he gets the glory of his *covenant* and *example*; ſeeing it is by the grace treaſured up in theſe promiſes, that this walk

is

is begun, carried on, and perfected: therefore, *Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God,* 2 Cor. vii. 1.; and ſeeing from theſe promiſes believers bring all their comfort under difficulties; *Though my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting covenant, ordered in all things and ſure: for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.—By this walk Chriſt gets the glory of his *way* of *walking in the world;* in that it is a walk after Chriſt, as the moſt *perfect example* of holineſs, in doing and ſuffering, according to the will of God: hence they that walk in Chriſt, are ſaid to walk as *he himſelf walked,* and to be *followers of the Lamb whitherſoever he goes.*—In a word, by this walk Chriſt gets the glory of his *grace* and *free favour:* for, as this walk is a fruit and effect of his grace; ſo it hath a natural, as well as inſtituted tendency, to advance the praiſe of his glorious grace; and all the believer's walk ſhould be directed to this end. Here is a ſtrong motive, it is a walk neceſſary to the glory of Chriſt.

(3.) The glory of God the *Holy Ghoſt* calls for this walk; for the Father and the Son have committed the ſaints, to the Spirit's charge, to this very end and purpoſe, that they might be ſanctified and made holy. Sanctification of heart and life, is made the Spirit's perſonal operation; *Becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth,* 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. This holy walk doth belong, according to the œconomy of grace, to the Father, to purpoſe it; to the Son, to purchaſe it; to the Spirit, to work it: and it is not to the Spirit's honour that God's nurſery and plantation, committed to his charge, ſhould not thrive and proſper: it is not for the Spirit's honour, to dwell in defiled temples: it is not to the Spirit's honour, that any, committed by the Father and the Son to his charge, ſhould miſcarry or fall away, either totally, from all grace; or finally, for all time: nay, this, or any thing that looks like it, is ſo far from being to his honour, that it is to his greateſt

eſt diſhonour: yea, it is a great grief to the Spirit, when the work of grace doth not go on and proſper in the ſoul; for, it is he that worketh us to this very thing; and therefore is called the *Spirit of holineſs*.—The Father hath left the Son in charge to be the Captain of our ſalvation, to *bring many children to glory*: the Son hath left the Spirit in charge, with all his Father's children, to *guide them by his counſel, and bring them to his glory*: Father, Son, and Spirit are one, and agree in one, for our ſanctification. Chriſt *ſends the Comforter* for this end, to *lead his people in all truth*, John xiv. 16. And how is the Spirit glorified in his graces, glorified in his comforts, glorified in his influences, glorified in his operations, while we give evidence, by our walk, that he is perfecting his own work, and ripening our ſouls for heaven! Whereupon this walk in Chriſt, is alſo called a *walking in the Spirit*.—Now, believer, what think ye, or what ſhall you and I think of this great motive to this Chriſtian walk, the glory of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt? Surely when we ſpeak to believers, we cannot be ſuppoſed to ſpeak to ſuch, as have no regard to the glory of God, the praiſe of Chriſt, or the honour of the Holy Ghoſt: why then, I think it may melt your hearts, for our unchriſtian walk hitherto, and move our ſouls to a more Chriſtian walk hereafter; that by the glory of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, we ſtand obliged to this Chriſtian walk: *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him.*

2*dly*, The *advantage of man* is another motive, that may be branched out into many particulars; whether we conſider the neceſſity of this Chriſtian walk, with reſpect to our *own advantage*, or the *advantage of others*.

(1.) It is neceſſary in reſpect of *ourſelves*; and the advantage that accrues to the children of God, by this Chriſtian walk, lies in theſe particulars.

1. The firſt advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it is the *porch of communion with God*: none but thoſe that walk in Chriſt, *have fellowſhip with the Father, and with the Son*. While a man is prophane and unſanctified, *what communion can there be between light and darkneſs?*

neſs? God is light in the abſtract, and an impure ſinner is darkneſs in the abſtract. As a man cannot have communion with beaſts, becauſe they live not the ſame life: ſo, a natural man cannot have communion with God, becauſe he lives not the ſame life; nay, he is alienated from the life of God: but when a man walks in Chriſt, then he walks with God; and when you walk in Chriſt, God walks in you. *Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people,* 2 Cor. vi. 16.

2. The next advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it *exalts a man above his neighbours;* lifts him up above the ſphere of other men: *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.* A gracious poor man is far more excellent than a graceleſs rich nobleman, not withſtanding all his titles of honour. The ſaints are God's jewels; the reſt of the world are but lumber, with all their land and lordſhips.

3. The third advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it *turns moral virtues into graces.* Some perſons are naturally more meek, and ſober, and patient than others: and ſome natural men are morally juſt and righteous, in their dealing and converſation in the world; honeſt dealers, good pay-maſters, make their word their deed: all this, a man may be, and do, and yet periſh for ever. But whenever grace, and a Chriſtian walk enters, and ſanctification in the power of it, then the principle of grace turns theſe moral virtues into graces: his natural and moral actions are now performed from inward and renewed principles; he now acts FROM God, and FOR God in all that he doth; whether he eats or drinks, or buys or ſells. As carnal hearts are always carnal, even in ſpiritual performances; for the ſtreams never run higher than the head: ſo, on the contrary, gracious hearts are ſpiritual, even in natural and moral actions; for, *they that are in Chriſt are new creatures;* acting from new principles.

4. The next advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it is the *matter of our joy.* There is the joy and peace of our juſtification, that is founded upon the righteouſneſs

of

of Chriſt's merit for us: this is the greateſt ground of the believer's joy. But next in virtue to that, there is the joy and peace of ſanctification, flowing from the righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Spirit in us; of which the apoſtle ſpeaks, when he ſays, *This is our rejoicing, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our converſation in the world:* and the pſalmiſt, when he ſays, *Great peace have they that love thy law*, Pſal. cxix. 165. Whereas, *there is no peace to the wicked:* and therefore Chriſt's coming, at death and judgment, will be terrible to them, both becauſe they are deſtitute of the righteouſneſs of juſtification and ſanctification; for it is only *the pure in heart that ſhall ſee God.* At death and judgment, a dram of ſaving grace will be more valuable, more comfortable, than mountains of gold, and millions of worlds. Oh! the midnight cry at death and judgment, ſaying, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him!* How terrible will it be to the fooliſh virgins, that have no oil in their lamps, nor grace in their hearts! Alas! how dolefully will you cry in that day, man! How dreadfully will you ſhriek! But Chriſt will not hear you; yea, he will *ſhut the door againſt you*, Matth. 25. 10. Then, knock never ſo hard, cry never ſo loud, the *door is ſhut;* there is no hope of entrance.

5. The fifth advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it is *an evidence of a gracious ſtate*, for the confirmation of our faith: hence Abraham ſhewed his faith by his works; whereby it was juſtified from the calumny of a falſe faith, James ii. 21,—23. And this, indeed, contributes to make this holy walk a comfortable thing; becauſe it is the fruit, effect, and evidence of juſtification: though it be no ground or foundation thereof, yet it is an evidence of it, and of a gracious ſtate. How ſhall a man evidence that he hath *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, but by *walking in him?*

6. The next advantage of this Chriſtian walk is, that it is a *walking toward heaven;* heaven is at the end of the walk: hence it is ſaid, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. And *no unclean thing ſhall*

enter into heaven, Rev. xxi. 27. Without are dogs and ſwine, but within are the pure and holy. Believe it, man, without holineſs on earth, there is no happineſs in heaven. This Chriſtian walk is the very beginning of heaven, where the ſaints *walk with him in white:* this holy walk is a great part of heaven and ſalvation itſelf; hence in that golden chain, Rom. viii. 30. *Whom he called, them he juſtified; whom he juſtified, them he glorified;*— no mention is made of ſanctification, to ſhew that ſanctity and holineſs is heaven and glory begun: it is not only the way to heaven, but it is heaven itſelf. The more we walk in Chriſt, the more do we live the life of God, and anticipate the life of heaven; that glorious life, which the angels of God, and the bleſſed ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, live there. This Chriſtian walk makes a man *meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light.* What would a carnal heart do with heaven, that knows no other heaven but to eat, drink, and wallow in ſenſual delights? So the glutton at a feaſt cried, *There is no heaven like this.* We muſt not look for a Turkiſh paradiſe in heaven; but for a pure ſinleſs ſtate: perfection of grace, and fulneſs of joy, in the preſence of God's glory, is the ſaints heaven. An unſanctified man cannot truly deſire heaven; he may deſire it as a privation of ſuffering and miſery, but not as it is a perfection of grace, a privation of all ſin, and perfection of holineſs: when a man begins to be holy, then he begins to enter into the white cloud of glory.—O then, ſeeing every one would be happy, and would be with Chriſt for ever, who would not deſire to be holy and to walk in him? A graceleſs man is very miſerable in both worlds; he miſſes heaven in this world, and loſes heaven in the world to come; nay, he was a hell of ſin here, and a hell of ſuffering hereafter: fire and brimſtone is his portion. But the gracious man is the happy man: indeed he hath heaven begun here, and heaven perfected hereafter. Here then are ſome of the advantages of this Chriſtian walk to the children of God.

In a word, this Chriſtian walk is the way, to bring down the bleſſing of God, on every work of your hand;

Pſalm

Pſal. i. 4. *Whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* Whereas, to walk in the way of ſwearing, drunkenneſs, whoredom, Sabbath-breaking, curſing, lying, cheating, is the direct way to bring down the curſe of God upon all the works of your hand.

Now, I think the conſideration of theſe advantages, ſhould move us to this walk; while the diſadvantages of the contrary walk muſt be as grievous, as the advantages of this are precious. And though, when we ſpeak to them that are in Chriſt, we cannot denounce againſt them the curſe of the covenant of works, which they are altogether freed from; yet, if they be untender in their walk, there are many other things, beſides the curſe, which belong only to, and lie heavy upon Chriſtleſs ſinners, that may be the believer's motive.—Is it nothing to you, believer, that your heavenly Father ſhould chaſtiſe you, hide his face from you, deny an anſwer to your prayers, conceal your evidences of heaven from you, give you up to the tyranny of your luſts, and then take vengeance on your inventions? Yea, he will thus *viſit your iniquities with rods*, if you walk not in Chriſt, and in his way, *though his loving-kindneſs he will not take away, nor ſuffer his covenant to fail.*—Thus much for the advantages of it with reſpect to *ourſelves.*

(2.) This Chriſtian walk is neceſſary with reſpect to *others:* and the advantage of this walk with reſpect to our neighbour, both godly and wicked, and all in general will appear by conſidering the following particulars.

1. Our Chriſtian walk would be for advantage to the *wicked;* for it may tend for their conviction and converſation.—On the one hand, this walk may tend to their *conviction*, and to ſtop their mouths; 1 Pet. ii. 15. *This is the will of God, that by well-doing, ye may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men.* See alſo, chap. iii. 16. *Having a good conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be aſhamed that faſly accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt.*—On the other hand, your walk may tend to their *converſation;* 1 Pet. ii. 12. *Having your converſation honeſt among the Gentiles; that whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil-doers, they may, by*

your good works, which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of viſitation. The holineſs of profeſſors hath ſometimes tended to the converſion of the profane, who, in the day of their gracious viſitation, have glorified God on that account. See alſo, 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. How advantageous and profitable ſuch a walk may be, the apoſtle tells us, Tit. iii. 8. *This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will that thou affirm conſtantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works: theſe things are good and profitable unto men.*

2. Our Chriſtian walk may be for advantage to the *godly*, who are thereby excited and encouraged to be the more holy, by the ſtrict converſation, which they behold in others; and to ſay with thoſe, Zech. viii. 23. *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* Whereas an untender walk doth grieve and ſtumble them; but a Chriſtian walk will rejoice the hearts and ſtrengthen the hands, both of godly people, and godly miniſters; *I have no greater joy*, ſays the beloved diſciple, *than to hear that my children walk in truth*, 3 John ver. 4.

3. Our Chriſtian walk may be of advantage to *all in general*, that are round about us; yea, to the whole generation we live among: for, in this way we would become a public good, a common good; not only in communicating good to them, but in diverting judgments from them, among whom we converſe; ſo ten righteous perſons would have preſerved Sodom: and ſurely, if *the Lord had not left us a remnant*, in this generation, *we had been like Sodom and Gomorrah*, in reſpect of judgments, as we are in reſpect of ſins; for, the moſt part of the generation are declaring their ſin as Sodom.—Thus the advantage of man is a great motive to this Chriſtian walk.

3*dly*, The *credit of the goſpel* is another great motive, to this Chriſtian walk; by this we are called to *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in all things*, Tit. ii. 10. By this walk we adorn the goſpel of Chriſt. As the glory of God, the advantage of man, ſo the credit of the

the goſpel obliges unto this walk. The goſpel is honoured thereby in many reſpects.

1. Goſpel *doctrine* is honoured by this walk, while thereby we are taught, in an efficacious manner; *The grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, which teaches us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*, and to *live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in a preſent world*, Tit. ii. 11, 12. Every doctrine of the goſpel teaches this holy walk.—The doctrine of *election*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13.—The doctrine of *redemption*, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.—The doctrine of *vocation*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 7.—The doctrine of *juſtification*, which is to take away the *guilt* of ſin, Rom. iii. 25.—The doctrine of *ſanctification*, which is to take away the *power* and *filth* of ſin, 1 Cor. vi. 11.—The doctrine of *glorification*, which takes away the very *being* of ſin, and admits of no ſin at all.——Every doctrine of the goſpel tends to the advancement of this holy, Chriſtian walk. And,

2. Goſpel *promiſes* are honoured thereby, inſomuch that this walk is excited powerfully thereby; 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* The promiſes are the cords of love, whereby we are ſweetly bound to the ſervice of God, and the acceptable performance of religious duties.

3. Goſpel *rules* are honoured by this walk, which is the law of God, as a rule of holineſs and righteouſneſs, and as diſburdened of the covenant of works, in his fœderal requiſition of the condition of life from us; for, we are no more commanded to DO that we may LIVE, while we walk in Chriſt: we *live*, that we may walk in Chriſt; and *do not walk*, that we may live. The law here is alſo diſburdened of its terrible curſe, and of its irritating power; and therefore may well be called a *law of liberty*, to the man in Chriſt; an *eaſy yoke*; and *commandments that are not grievous*, James i. 25. Mat. xi. 30. 1 John v. 3.

4. Goſpel *examples* and *patterns* are honoured by this walk, it being a walk according to theſe examples; it being a walking after the example of Chriſt. A goſpel

walk

walk is a walking after God Jehovah, as our Father; and after Chriſt, as our leader; and after the Spirit, as our guide; and after the example of the ſaints, as they were followers of Chriſt: we are to *follow them who, through faith and patience, do inherit the promiſes;* and to *follow the footſteps of the flock.*

5. Goſpel *ordinances* are honoured by this walk, while we are careful and conſcientious, in our attendance upon theſe, with an eye to the God of ordinances, for his bleſſing upon them, whether public or private; particularly upon the hearing of the joyful ſound, the goſpel meſſage; and regular participation of the goſpel ſacraments.

6. Goſpel *privileges* are honoured by this walk; and particularly, all the privileges that go along with the goſpel ſtate, while we walk worthy of, and ſuitable to theſe privileges, and that ſtate.—Are you believers in a goſpel-ſtate, being effectually called? Why then, you are to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.*—Are you in a juſtified ſtate? then you are to evidence your juſtification, by your ſanctification.—Are you in a ſanctified ſtate? wherefore got you a new nature, but to *walk before God in newneſs of life?*—Are you in an adopted ſtate? then it is ſuitable to that ſtate, that you be *followers of God as dear children.*——O Sirs, if we be believers, is it not a ſhame for us, to live ſo unſuitable to our ſtate? Is this all the thanks we give to God, for theſe privileges, that we trample his ſtatutes under our feet, diſhonour his name, break his law, and grieve his Spirit? Oh! ſhall we render acts of enmity for all his acts of love towards us! Fy for ſhame! *Tell it not in Gath.*——Have we the hope of glory, and ſhall we not, having *this hope, purify ourſelves, even as he is pure?*—Are we *ſeparate* from the world? and ſhall we walk in the broad way with the reſt?—Hath God *pitied* us? and ſhall we not ſtudy to pleaſe him?—Hath he *waſhed* us in the blood of his Son? and ſhall we wallow in the mire of our luſts? or rather, ſhall we not ſtudy to let it be known to the world, that his blood hath a virtue to ſanctify us?——Well, brethren, if we do not walk in Chriſt, we do diſcredit to the goſpel doc-

trine,

trine, goſpel promiſes, goſpel rules, goſpel examples, goſpel ordinances, and goſpel privileges, and counteract the deſign of a goſpel ſtate.——Theſe are the motives to this goſpel walk.

The *fourth* and *laſt* thing upon this ſecond branch of the exhortation was, the *directive* part of it, namely, to give ſome *directions*, in order to our walking with Chriſt. In general, I hope I need not tell you, that you muſt be in a *goſpel ſtate*, otherwiſe you cannot have a *goſpel walk*: we muſt firſt be *married* to Chriſt, before we can *bring forth fruit unto God*, Rom. vii. 4. We muſt firſt be in Chriſt, the true vine, before we can *bear good fruit*, John xv. 5. And therefore, let this be your principal ſtudy, to be ſure that the ſtate be changed, and that you *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, otherwiſe you cannot walk in him. All other directions will be in vain without this. And now, as we go along, lift up a prayer with your heart, that the Lord may bleſs the following advices and directions, where-with I deſign to put a period to this ſubject.

[1.] Our firſt direction, in order to your walking in Chriſt, is to *beware of all impediments that hinder this walk*. And I will mention you a few of theſe hinderances of the Chriſtian walk; both that you may beware of them, and alſo ſeek to be rid of them.

1. *Darkneſs* hinders walking. A man that wants light, and is in the dark, cannot walk comfortably: even ſo, the darkneſs of ignorance hinders this Chriſtian walk; *They that walk in the night ſtumble.* O pray, that God may take away your groſs darkneſs. It is midnight with many, in reſpect of black and dark ignorance: and therefore, no wonder that they ſtumble and fall; ſome into one open wickedneſs, and ſome into another.

2. *Heedleſneſs* hinders walking. When a man doth not take heed to the way, but is gazing about him, he is ready either to daſh his foot againſt a ſtone, and ſo fall and break his bones; or elſe he is ready to wander out of the way, while he doth not notice the road: even ſo, ſpiritual heedleſneſs and unwatchfulneſs, is the cauſe of many wandering ſteps out of God's way;

Watch

Watch therefore and pray, ſaith Chriſt, *that ye enter not into temptation.*

3. *Weakneſs* hinders walking. If a man be ſick and weakly, he is hardly able to walk abroad: even ſo, as there is a bodily weakneſs, ſo there is ſoul weakneſs. As all by nature are *without ſtrength;* even ſo, thoſe that are ſometime ſtrengthened by grace, may turn weak and powerleſs: while corruption is ſtrong, grace is weak, faith is weak. Seek to have this impediment removed, by being *ſtrong in the Lord*, ſaying, *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, even of his only.*

4. *Fetters* hinder walking. If you bind a man, he will walk at leiſure. Many are bound with the ſtrongeſt fetters; even believers may be under the conduct and influence of ſome ſecret luſts, and theſe are ſo binding, that they are like fetters: they have the binding power of a law; and hence are called, *the law of the members, warring againſt the law of the mind*, Rom. vii. 23. And again, *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me.* Seek therefore, that *the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, may make you free from the law of ſin and death.* Seek to be free of your fetters, to be looſed of your bands: *Surely, I am thy ſervant, thou haſt looſed my bonds.*

5. *Weights* hinder walking. If a man hath a clog at his heels, a heavy weight on his back, he will not walk hard. There is a two-fold weight that hinders the Chriſtian walk much: the weight of *worldly incumberances;* the *cares of the world* are a dead weight, that keep many from walking. O Sirs, caſt off that weight. There is alſo the weight of *predominant ſin:* whatever be the weight, we are to lay it aſide, that we may be in caſe to walk, yea, and to run in God's way; *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us; and run with patience the race ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of faith*, Heb. xii. 1.

6. *Diverſions* hinder walking. There is ſome company, if a man meet with, in his way wherein he walketh, they will mightily hinder and retard him in his journey; ſo it is with the carnal company of the men

of

of this world. They will not walk faſt in God's way, but make many a ſtop, who haunt the company of graceleſs and profane perſons, that mock at religion, idle away their time, and neglect their ſouls.

7. *Diſcord* hinders walking. If men fall out by the way; if, inſtead of walking together with concord, they fall by the ears, this will hinder and marr their walking; yea, perhaps, they may diſable one another, that they can walk no more, but muſt ly by the way: ſo here, diſcord and contention hindereth the ſpiritual walking. They that live in the fire of ſtrife, have little of the life of religion: they that are fighting in the way, are not walking in it: they that are occupied in ſlandering, backbiting, reproaching their neighbours; and eſpecially that fall out with the godly, and cannot live at peace with them, or in love to them, their walking is marred: therefore, beware of diſcord; where there is much diviſion, there is little devotion.

8. *Doubting* and *diſcouragement* hinder walking. If a man doubt about the road wherein he walketh; if he doubt that it is not the way, that will carry him to his deſired journey's end, or to the place he hath in view, then he is diſcouraged, and hath little heart to walk therein: even ſo, doubting inſtead of believing, marrs our ſpiritual walk, and fills the ſoul with diſcouragement. David reaſons himſelf out of his diſcouragement, ſaying, *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God,* Pſalm xlii. 11. Many reaſon themſelves out of their faith, inſtead of reaſoning themſelves into faith. Doubting is no duty; nay, it is a ſin that hinders our walk: diſcouragement is no duty; no, no: *the joy of the Lord ſhould be our ſtrength.*

9. *Intemperance* hinders walking. If a man intoxicate himſelf with drink, and overcharge his belly with meat, he is more fit for loitering and ſnorting in a bed, than walking on the road; it impedes his walking: hence we will ſee ſome beaſtly drunken perſons attempt to walk in the ſtreet; but inſtead of walking, we will ſee them ſtaggering from ſide to ſide, or tumbling down, and ex-

poſing themſelves to open infamy. Well, this intemperance is ſuch a hinderance to all ſpiritual walking, that if a man be ſtuffed with meat and drink, and immoderate cares, he is altogether unfit for ſpiritual work and worſhip: therefore Chriſt warns his diſciples, even them, to beware of it; *Take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting, and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you unawares.—Watch therefore, and pray always,* Luke xxi. 34, 35. Let habitual drunkards and tipplers conſider whether they are walking; for ſurely they are not walking in Chriſt, but in the broad way that leadeth to deſtruction. Let thoſe that cannot make a bargain, without drinking to exceſs, as many uſe to do at your public markets, conſider this.

10. *Slothfulneſs* and *lazineſs* hinder walking. When people ſhut themſelves up in a cloſe chamber, as it were, to ſleep and ſlumber, ſurely their walking is marred: even ſo, nothing hinders this Chriſtian walk more, than ſpiritual ſloth and ſecurity.—— I will tell you two chambers wherein eſpecially the ſlothful, lazy, and ſecure ſinner ſhuts up himſelf to ſleep into. There is the chamber of *lies*, and the chamber of *eaſe*.

(1.) The chamber of *lies;* or, as the prophet Iſaiah calls it, the *refuge of lies*, chap. xxviii. 15. *They have made lies their refuge, and under falſhood have they hid themſelves.* Whether it be the lying refuge of their legal righteouſneſs, their phariſaic profeſſion, their credle faith, their falſe hope, partial repentance, legal convictions, their carnal dreams and deluſions; if they ſleep on there, God's curſe will hale them out of that chamber; for, *The hail ſhall ſweep away the refuge of lies.* Some are brought out in mercy, but the moſt part are dragged out in wrath.

(2.) The chamber of *eaſe; Moab hath been at eaſe from his youth*, Jer. xlviii. 11.: never truly awakened, never duly concerned about their ſoul and their eternal ſtate, nor concerned about the affairs of Chriſt's houſe; notwithſtanding of all the trouble of Zion, or dangerous circumſtances that the church of Chriſt is into: there is a wo upon the bed, and a wo upon the cover-

ing

ing of thoſe that are lying at eaſe; *Wo to them that are at eaſe in Zion*, Amos vi. 1. Now, that partial ſecurity may overtake believers themſelves, is too evident, not only from common experience, but alſo from the parable of the virgins; where it is ſaid, both of the wiſe and fooliſh, that, *while the Bridegroom tarried, they all ſlumbered and ſlept:* but ſlothfulneſs and walking are inconſiſtent. Seek therefore, that God would deliver from ſloth and ſecurity: *The ſlothful man ſaith, there is a lion in the way;* he will not walk forward.—Theſe are ſome hinderances of walking; ſeek to be free of theſe, and beware of them, if you would walk in Chriſt.

[2.] The next direction, in order to this walk, is this, *O endeavour, through grace, that every action may be a ſtepping in this way;* then would we walk in Chriſt to purpoſe, if we could learn to make every action of our life, a ſtep of our walk in this way. It is poſſible to a child of God, through grace, that any action of his life may be a part of his Chriſtian walk: *e. g.* even in his *natural* actions, of eating and drinking; when, *whether he eats or drinks, or whatſoever he doth, he doth all to the glory of God in Chriſt;* then he is walking in Chriſt, even when he is eating and drinking. But I inſtance eſpecially in our religious, and in our civil actions.

1. Let all your *religious* actions be a part of your walking in Chriſt; for this walk extends to all religious duties. When a man is reading the word, with the Spirit and underſtanding, then he is walking in Chriſt. When he is hearing the word, with faith, he is walking in Chriſt. When he is praying in the Holy Ghoſt, in the Spirit of Chriſt, then he is walking in Chriſt. When he is ſinging and praiſing, with grace in his heart, he is walking in Chriſt. When he is communicating worthily, then he is walking in Chriſt; for then he is *eating the fleſh, and drinking the blood of the Son of God.* —And ſince I have mentioned this, I ſhall take liberty to ſay, that I underſtand there are ſeveral obliged to be hearers in this place to-day, who may ſee it incumbent upon them, to be communicants elſewhere the next Lord's day; and therefore, though I drop a word ſuitable to them, I think it cannot be reckoned amiſs; and

though there is no direction I am offering, but they may find abundantly ſuitable to their caſe, yet I would here ſay, that this Chriſtian walk is ſo extenſive, that it comprehends all the duties, both before, in, and after communicating; and right partaking of the Lord's Supper, is a ſpecial part of this walking in Chriſt. As a man may be ſtanding in the church, and yet walking in Chriſt, if ſpiritually exerciſed; and as a man may be lying in a priſon, and yet walking in Chriſt, as Paul and Silas were, in the ſtocks: ſo, much more, may a man be ſitting at a communion-table, and yet walking in Chriſt; for walking in Chriſt doth not ly in bodily exerciſe, but in ſoul exerciſe; as in the exerciſe of faith, the exerciſe of love, the exerciſe of repentance, and godly ſorrow for ſin, the exerciſe of joy in the Lord: when a man is in that exerciſe, under the conduct of the Spirit of Chriſt, then he is walking in Chriſt.

What is the duty then before communication? It is to walk in Chriſt. What is the duty in communicating? It is to walk in Chriſt. What is the duty after communicating? It is to walk in Chriſt.

There are two words I have to tell thoſe, and take the liberty to offer them. The firſt is, that none can communicate worthily, that are not in Chriſt, by having *received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, that are not believers. The ſecond is, that people may be believers, that have *received Chriſt*, and yet communicate unworthily, if they be not *walking in him.*

(1.) I ſay, that none can *communicate worthily*, that are not in Chriſt, by *receiving of him.* It is the childrens bread, and is not deſigned for the converſion of ſinners, but for the confirmation of ſaints. Why? may not, and have not ſome been converted at ſacraments? It may be ſo; but yet this ſacrament is not in itſelf deſignedly inſtitute, for the converſion of ſinners: ſome have, indeed, been converted at communion ſermons; but I have not heard of any Chriſtleſs ſinner converted at a communion-table, where he himſelf was partaking. It may be, there have been inſtances of this, that I have not heard; but yet that doth not falſify what I aſſert, that it is not a converting ordinance: muſt we run a man

man through with a ſword to ſave his life; becauſe one did ſo once, and let out a ſecret impoſthume? Becauſe ſome miniſter hath been converted at his ordination, is therefore the laying on of hands inſtitute as a converting ordinance? No; by no means. Becauſe a man hath been converted at his marriage, when the ſermon and bleſſing hath wrought upon him, is therefore marriage a converting ordinance? No; not at all. Let this then be remembered, that none can communicate wothily, that are not in Chriſt, by receiving him.

(2.) That people may be believers, that have received Chriſt, and yet *communicate unworthily*, if they be not *walking in Chriſt*. Let communicants then endeavour, through grace, to prepare and examine themſelves; *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat.* Why, a man may examine himſelf and find himſelf both out of Chriſt, and out of a courſe of walking in him: ſhall he eat in any caſe upon examination? No, no; the meaning is, let him examine whether he be *in Chriſt*, yea, or not; and ſee if he can prove his being *in Chriſt*, by his *walking in him*. As a man that tries gold with a touchſtone, will not take it becauſe he tried it, but becauſe he found it true gold: and as a man will not go abroad, becauſe he hath beheld himſelf in a looking-glaſs, for he may find deformity and filthineſs; but becauſe he hath corrected what was amiſs, and compoſed his dreſs by looking at himſelf: and ſo unleſs we will prevaricate with the ſcripture, the Holy Ghoſt means, by that word, a fitneſs and preparation found; and yet thoſe that prepare for that ordinance, muſt never expect ſuch a preparation, as will not ſtand in need of Chriſt: nay, Chriſt himſelf muſt be the great preparation; for this ordinance hath a ſpecial relation to Chriſt: and it is by walking in him, that we have communion with him in that ordinance.

QUEST. *How ſhall I attain this privilege to walk in Chriſt?*

ANSW. How doth a man come to walk in his cloaths? Is it not even by putting them on? So, if you would *walk in Chriſt*, you muſt *put on Chriſt*; Rom. xiii. 14. *Put on Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and make no proviſion for the*

the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof. Put off your filthy garments, Eph. iv. 22. put on Chriſt. It is true, many put on Chriſt, as a man puts on his ſhoe, to trample upon him. Some put on Chriſt as a man doth his hat, which he lifts to every paſſenger; they will compliment every company with their religion, and put on or put off their profeſſion of Chriſt, according as the company goes. Some put him on, as people will put on a fine glaring embroidery upon their cloaths, for ornament, and not for uſe. But they that truly put on Chriſt, as they put him on, never to put him off again; ſo they put on Chriſt as a robe; particularly the robe of his righteouſneſs, for their juſtification; and the robe of his grace, for their ſanctification: that is, they take him in his merit, to juſtify them; and in his Spirit, to ſanctify them: and as a man walks in his robes that he hath put on, ſo they that go to a communion-table in this robe, they go walking in Chriſt; and ſo they have the wedding-garment, and ſhall have the Bridegroom's favour. Here is the robe we ought all to walk in: it is heaven's parliament-robe; and to walk in it, is to wear it; and to wear it, is to walk in it. To have Chriſt, and to uſe him, is the ſum of all true religion.

But to return, I was ſaying, firſt let all your religious actions be a part of your walking in Chriſt, whether it be your reading, hearing, praying, praiſing, communicating, or the like,

2. Let all your *civil* actions alſo, be a part of your walking in Chriſt. A man may be walking in Chriſt, when he is buying and ſelling, if he be acting ſpiritually, conſcientiouſly, and in the name of Chriſt; and acknowledging the Lord in all his ways.—And becauſe of the market you have now in view, I ſhall tell you what are the ſinful ways that people take, in buying and ſelling, which declare that they are not walking in Chriſt, when about theſe actions.—There is the diſparaging and under-rating of what you are to buy; and the raiſing and over-valuing of what you are to ſell; and both without juſt cauſe: ſee Prov. xx. 14. *It is nought, it is nought, ſaith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boaſteth.*—There is the ſin of abuſing men's ſimplicity

plicity and unſkilfulneſs, and uſing falſe weights, balances, and meaſures to deceive; Prov. xi. 1. *A falſe balance is an abomination to the Lord.*—Again, ſome will, I underſtand, ſet off the goodlieſt face of their wares outmoſt to the market; the buyer takes all to be of the ſame ſort, at the word of the ſeller. Thus they are guilty of a double cheat; they cheat their neighbour's eye with their wares, and cheat their mind with their words; and thus both their hands and lips are full of cheating and deceit: but they ſhould know that they cannot cheat God, who ſurely will not let them thrive that way; or, if they ſeem to thrive, it is with his curſe upon their gain. God hath ſaid, *None that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, ſhall enter into heaven; but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life,* Rev. xxi. 27.: Intimating, that thoſe, among others, who are cheaters and liars, they may well read their names written in the black book of death and damnation; but they cannot read ſuch foul names as theirs, in the fair little white book of life, the Lamb's book of life.—— O Sirs, there is a way of walking in Chriſt, even in all your natural, religious, and civil actions. The direction then that I was giving is; O endeavour, through grace, that every action of your life, may be a ſtep forward in this way, by doing all in his fear, and through his grace.

[3.] The third direction, with which I cloſe, is to endeavour, through grace, to *improve all theſe means*, and to make conſcience of the diligent uſe of all the means, that tend to advance this Chriſtian walk: and here I mention theſe four means.

1. A punctual and ſerious attendance upon goſpel-ordinances; Prov. viii. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, and waiting at the poſts of my doors.*

2. Frequent converſation with goſpel-profeſſors, whoſe walk adorns the ſame: *He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall be wiſe.* See Heb. vi. 12. *Be not ſlothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes.*

3. Prayer; *Continue in prayer, and watch in the ſame, with*

with thankſgiving, Col. iv. 2. Seek the aſſiſtance of the *goſpel-ſpirit*, who only can enable you to this walk, Luke xi. 13. Seek him as a Spirit of *power* to ſtrengthen you; for, *it is he that worketh in you, both to will and to do*, Phil. ii. 13. Seek him as a Spirit of *faith*, that by faith in exerciſe you may abide in Chriſt: for, *except ye abide in him, ye cannot bring forth fruit*, John xv. 4. That by drawing virtue and water out of theſe wells of ſalvation, and fountain of life, and receiving out of his fulneſs grace for grace, ye may live on him, and walk in him. And that, by faith, ye may make uſe of the goſpel-promiſe, and thereby be *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. And that by this faith ye may fix all your reſolves for duty, in the ſtrength of the Lord God, with a deſign to make honourable mention of the Mediator's righteouſneſs, in every performance, as that alone whereby ye are juſtified in your perſons, and accepted in your performances, Pſalm lxxi. 16, 19, 24.

4. Spiritual meditation; *I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet to thy teſtimonies*. Mediate on your ways, how ſinful and ungrateful they have been; how unlike unto the ways of the children of God, and thoſe who have received ſo many favours. Again, mediate on the Lord's way, how ſweet, pleaſant, profitable, and honourable it is.——And though, through much tribulation you may enter into the kingdom of heaven, and muſt reſolve upon the croſs; yet amidſt all the croſſes of the way, mediate upon theſe two things in this way you are called to walk in.

(1.) The *red carpet* that is laid over all the way; that is, the red carpet of the blood of Chriſt: and as the ſaints have always overcome by the blood of the Lamb; ſo by this blood of Chriſt you ſhall overcome all the difficulties in the way, and walk upon the red carpet.

(2.) The *white pavement* that is below the carpet, all along the way you walk in; and that is the white pavement of love, the love of God in Chriſt. Song iii. 10.; there Solomon's chariot, repreſenting the goſpel-covenant, is ſaid to have a *covering of purple*; there is the red carpet of the blood of Chriſt: and it is ſaid to be

paved

paved with love, for the daughters of Jeruſalem; there is the white pavement of divine love. Now, the holy meditation and perſuaſion of God's ſpecial love in Chriſt, to you in particular: his love already manifeſted, in what he hath done for you, and in you: his love to be manifeſted, in what he is to do for you, in conducting you to the actual and full poſſeſſion of the glorious inheritance reſerved in heaven for you; nothing will more engage to a goſpel-walk, than this; *The love of Chriſt will conſtrain you,* 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. Pſalm lxxiii. 24.

Neglect not theſe means; and if Satan tempt you, ſaying, What need of the uſe of means, ſince God hath promiſed, to *cauſe you to walk in his ſtatutes?* Anſwer him as Chriſt did, when Satan tempted him, to caſt himſelf down from the pinacle of the temple, by adducing the promiſe that God had given his angels charge over him, to keep him in all his ways; his anſwer to Satan was; *It is written, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* So, when Satan tempts you, to caſt yourſelf from the pinacle of the temple, from temple means and ordinances, let your anſwer then be, *Thou ſhall not tempt the Lord thy God.* To neglect the means, is to tempt the Lord. Let means be uſed in dependance on the Lord, who only can put a bleſſing in the means: they are like pipes and conduits, which convey nothing, unleſs the fountain let forth of its water; ſo they convey nothing, unleſs the Lord ſend forth a ſtream thereby. Therefore, in the uſe of means, be ſtill looking to the Lord, both for grace to uſe the means, and grace to bleſs the means.

Now, all the ſermons I have preached upon this text, will be ſo many ſtanding witneſſes, againſt all the unbelievers of this congregation, who do not *receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* and all believers that, having received him, do not *walk in him.* Be reſtleſs then, till he be received into your hearts and ſouls; and, having *received him, ſo walk in him.*

May the Lord himſelf put a bleſſing, in all that hath been ſaid from this text, and to his name be praiſe.

SERMON XLVII,---L.

The MAIN QUESTION of the GOSPEL CATECHISM, *What think ye of Chriſt?* *

MATTH. xxii. 42. *What think ye of Chriſt?*

MY friends, if you have any regard to the voice of the Son of God, ſpeaking to you in this text, then, to be ſure, the application of it is begun, before ever we come to the explication of it. And, indeed, if the Lord himſelf would open and apply it to you, you would ſee more in it than we can tell you. Perhaps many here, when the miniſter reads his text, turn up their Bibles, and put a mark upon the place of ſcripture: very well; but then they think there is the miniſter's text, and ſo no more of it; as if it were only the miniſter's concern, or at moſt, that it is only the miniſter's buſineſs to ſpeak to his text, and their buſineſs to hear what he ſays. But, my friends, you would know, that you have here more than a text, and it is my buſineſs, at the time, not only to read you a text, but to aſk you a queſtion; and I cannot reſume my text without propoſing it, *What think ye of Chriſt?* And it is your buſineſs, not only to hear ſeriouſly what is ſaid, but to anſwer ſolemnly before God what is aſked, namely, *What think ye of Chriſt?* If you take it up ſimply as my text, you will think yourſelves little concerned with it; but if you apprehend it as Chriſt's

* This ſubject was the ſubſtance of four ſermons, preached at Portmoak, *&c.* on ſacramental occaſions, Auguſt 22d, 1725. and hath undergone nine impreſſions.

queſtion

queſtion to you, then your concern is great. It is not my queſtion only; but, as Chriſt propoſed it to the Phariſees here; ſo, your hearing it repeated to you in Chriſt's name, and from his word, makes it his queſtion to you, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

At ſuch ſolemnities as this, you have occaſion to hear much of Chriſt; but now the queſtion is, What think ye of Chriſt, of whom you hear ſo much? Many, the more they hear of Chriſt, the leſs they think of him; like Iſrael, when they had the manna ſo plentifully rained down about their tent doors, they thought very little of it. But, wo will be to you, who hear much of Chriſt, and yet think little or nothing of him: *If any man love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſays the apoſtle, if he hath no eſteem of him, *let him be* ANATHEMA MARAN-ATHA: [i. e. *accurſed until our Lord come.*] If you have the ſacramental ſupper in view, you know Chriſt hath ordered you to ſearch and try before-hand, ſaying, *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat:* and now, if you would examine to purpoſe, I cannot ſee a more ſhort and ſubſtantial queſtion in all the Bible, to try yourſelves by, than this is, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Solomon ſays, Prov. xxiii. 7. *As a man thinketh in his heart, ſo is he;* where he declares the man's ſtate to be according as the thoughts of his heart go. Now, ſo it is here; truly, according as you think in your heart, eſpecially concerning Chriſt, ſo are you, and ſo is your ſtate in God's ſight: according as you think highly and duly of Chriſt or not, ſo are you either a gracious or a graceleſs man; either a believer or unbeliever; either a man fit to go to a communion-table or not; and therefore enquire into it, *What think ye of Chriſt?* The trial here comes to a narrow point, wherein God only can be the witneſs, who will be the Judge. You may deceive men with your words and works, which is all we have to know you by: but here you are called to try yourſelves by your thoughts, before that God that ſearches the heart, and ſees the thought; *What think ye of Chriſt?*

The occaſion of Chriſt's propounding this queſtion, was this. The Phariſees had propoſed ſeveral queſtions

to him concerning the law, by which they thought to have expoſed him, while they did but expoſe themſelves; particularly from verſe 15. and downward, thinking to intangle him, *They ſent forth their diſciples with the Herodians, ſaying, Maſter, what thinkeſt thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæſar, or not? What is lawful? or, what ſays the law concerning this?* Chriſt anſwers the queſtion to their aſtoniſhment and confuſion.—Again, from verſe 23. and downward, the Sadducees, who denied the reſurrection, came to him with a queſtion on that head; and they ſtart a difficulty out of the law of Moſes, which they thought was irreconcilable with the doctrine of the reſurrection: but Chriſt anſwers that alſo, and puts them to ſilence.—Again, afterwards, from ver. 34. and downward, the Phariſees finding that the Sadducees were ſilenced by him, they gather together their forces to puzzle and tempt him; and one of them, that was a lawyer, comes with another queſtion to him, ſaying, *Maſter, what is the great commandment in the law?* Now, they having aſked ſo many queſtions at him, and he having anſwered them all, it was time for him to aſk them a queſtion; and he does it while they are gathered together in confederacy againſt him; though their forces were unite, and every one preſent to help another, yet he puzzles them; for God delights to baffle his adverſaries, and conquer his enemies, when they think themſelves ſtrongeſt, and have all the advantages they can deſire. Now, Chriſt aſked them a queſtion, which they could eaſily anſwer: it was a queſtion in their own catechiſm; *What think ye of Chriſt?* And, *Whoſe Son is he?* They anſwer truly according to the ſcripture, that *he was the Son of David.* This they were taught, from Pſalm lxxxix. 35. and ſeveral other places, ſhewing, that the Meſſias was to be the *ſeed of David*, the *rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe.* But now Chriſt ſtarts a difficulty upon their anſwer, which they could not eaſily ſolve; nay, which ſilenced them, and all that fought occaſion againſt him, ver. 43, 44, 45. *If Chriſt be David's Son, how then is he David's Lord?* Chriſt did not hereby intend to enſnare them as they did him, but to inſtruct them in a neceſſary truth

which

which they were to believe, namely, that the expected Meſſiah is God as well as man; David's Lord as well as David's Son; and ſo *both the root and offspring of David*, Rev. xxii. 15. Now, herein they were puzzled, and put to ſilence.

Many are proud of their knowledge, becauſe they can anſwer ſome queſtions of their catechiſms, as the Phariſees here did in general; but yet they have reaſon to be aſhamed of their ignorance: for when the queſtion is opened up, they cannot confirm the truth which they affirm, nor reconcile one truth with another, no more than the Phariſees here could; by which it was evident, that though they anſwered, yet they did not underſtand this queſtion, which he propoſed, 1. More generally, *What think ye of Chriſt* the Meſſias? 2. More particularly, *Whoſe Son is he?* It is the queſtion, as propoſed in general, that I confine myſelf unto, yet not excluding the other branch of it, as the ſubject may bring it in. When Chriſt propoſe this queſtion to the Phariſees, *What think ye of Chriſt?* no doubt they reckoned their thoughts of the Meſſias were very ſound and right every way, while they thought he was the Son of David; but, like the damnable deluded Arian doctors of our day, they did not think ſo highly of him, as to apprehend him to be the Son of God; they did not think ſo honourably of him, as to own his being the ſupreme God, equal with the Father; for all their acquired and imagined knowledge, there was more in that queſtion than they underſtood, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

The Phariſees had aſked Chriſt ſeveral queſtions concerning the law, and the greater precept of the law; and now it was fit that Chriſt ſhould aſk them a queſtion concerning the great promiſe of the goſpel: they were ſo taken up with the law, they had no thought of the goſpel; they thought ſo much of Moſes, that they had no thought of Chriſt; therefore ſays he, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Many are ſo full of the law, that they forget him, who *is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* Here is a queſtion to check the pride of the legaliſts, *What think ye of Chriſt?* There is a depth in every place of ſcriptures, which, though it

ſeems

ſeems to be very plain to the carnal eye, yet the ſpiritual depth thereof cannot be ſounded without the help of the Spirit of God: there is alſo a great depth in this queſtion; angels cannot ſound the depth thereof, they pry into it, and cannot think enough of Chriſt; they can never think too much of him: and what ſhall men ſay in anſwer to it, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

To divide this text too critically, would, I ſuppoſe, be the way to confuſe it; but I think every word hath an emphaſis therein.

1. There is an emphaſis in the interrogative particle *What;* WHAT *think ye of Chriſt?* what place do you give him? what value do you put upon him? what grandeur and glory do you aſcribe unto him? what eſteem have you of him? And ſo,

2. There is an emphaſis in the verb *think:* ſome think not of him at all, God and Chriſt is not in all their thoughts; ſome think meanly, ſome think baſely, ſome think diſhonourably, ſome think hardly of him: but what think ye? what is your judgment of Chriſt? what is your opinion of him? what is your ſentiment of him? what is your apprehenſion of him? how ſtand you affected towards him? and what conſideration have you of him?

3. There is an emphaſis in the pronoun *ye; What think* YE *of Chriſt?* ye Phariſees and Sadducees; *What think* YE *of Chriſt?* Ye that are ſo buſy in ſtarting queſtions about the law, *What think ye of Chriſt, the end of the law?* Ye legaliſts and ſelf-righteous perſons, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Yea, though it was put to the Phariſees in particular, yet it concerns all in general. The trying queſtion that is propoſed for the conviction of hypocrites, and to find them out, is uſeful for the conſolation and confirmation of believers, and for diſcovering their uprightneſs. While the daughters of Jeruſalem think no more of Chriſt than of another beloved, ſaying, *What is thy beloved more than another?* the ſpouſe of Chriſt thinks him to be the *Chief among ten thouſands.* Therefore, it comes to you all, *What think ye of Chriſt,* believers and unbelievers? Surely *to them that believe he is precious.*

4. There

4. There is an emphaſis in the *object* or *matter* of the queſtion, *Chriſt; What think ye of* CHRIST; what think ye of the Meſſias? what think ye of the Anointed of God, the Chriſt of God? It is remarkable, Chriſt ſays not here, *What think ye of* ME? but, *What think ye of* CHRIST? that is *God's Anointed*, and the *Meſſias promiſed to the fathers:* and hereby it is intimate to us, that as Chriſt loves to magnify his office, as the Sent, and Sealed, and Anointed of God; ſo we cannot have right and becoming thoughts of him, unleſs we apprehend him in his ſaving offices, to which he is authorized of the Father: and ſo, when he ſays not, *What think ye of* ME? but, *What think ye of* CHRIST? He does not ſimply commend himſelf, but his Father alſo, who anointed him to that office; and himſelf, bearing his Father's commiſſion, and inveſted with his authority to ſave ſinners, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Here is the proper object of the eſteem of rational creatures, and eſpecially mankind ſinners, on whom their thoughts ought to be terminate. It is not, what think ye of God abſolutely conſidered? for, *God out of Chriſt is a conſuming fire.* It is not, what think ye of Moſes? You magnify Moſes and the law; but, *A greater than Moſes is here*, even he by whom the *law is magnified and made honourable.* It is not, what think ye of the miniſters and their ſermons? Oh! they are nothing but the image of death without him! but the queſtion is, *What think ye of Chriſt?* The word itſelf is but a dead letter without Chriſt. It is a remarkable ſaying that Chriſt hath to the ſame purpoſe, John v. 39, 40. *Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that teſtify of me: and ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* You think you have *eternal life* in the ſcripture, but the *ſcripture teſtifies of me;* yet *ye will not come to me*, though the ſcripture teſtifies that eternal life is only to be had in me. Chriſt is *the true God and eternal life*, 1 John v. 20. *And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*, ver. 11. Seeing, then, that the ſcripture teſtifies of Chriſt, that eternal life is in him; in vain do men think to have eternal life, even in the ſcripture, while they will not come to Chriſt, that

that they may have life. People may think reſpectfully of the ſcripture, and yet periſh in their ignorance, and die in a deluſion, while they do not think reſpectfully of Chriſt, in a ſuitableneſs to the teſtimony that the ſcripture gives of him; therefore, the great queſtion is ſtill, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

OBSERV. *That the great queſtion of the Chriſtian catechiſm, by which people are to try themſelves, is this,* WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

Here, you ſee, CHRIST, who is the catechiſt, that puts the queſtion, is alſo the catechiſm, the matter of the queſtion. It is to this ſame purpoſe that Chriſt demands an anſwer to this queſtion, both with reſpect to the people in general, what they thought of Chriſt; and alſo with reſpect to the diſciples themſelves, what they thought of him, Luke ix. 18, 19, 20. *Whom ſay the people that I am?* What is the ſentiment and opinion of the people about Chriſt? It is anſwered for the people, that ſome took him for *John the Baptiſt, ſome for Elias, ſome for one of the old prophets:* they had an eſteem of Chriſt, but not according to his worth and excellency, his grandeur and glory. Well, but ſays Chriſt to his diſciples, *Whom ſay ye that I am?* What is your thought and judgment? Peter anſwers, in the name of the reſt, ſaying, *Thou are the Chriſt of God.* Believers only can anſwer this queſtion to purpoſe, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

The method which I would here eſſay to proſecute, as the Lord may aſſiſt, ſhall be the following, *viz.*

I. To premiſe ſome *general remarks* for clearing of this doctrine.

II. To ſhew what is the *import* of this queſtion in the ſeveral parts thereof.

III. Offer ſome *reaſons* of the doctrine, ſhewing why this is the leading and trying queſtion in the Chriſtian catechiſm.

IV. Deduce ſome *inferences*, and ſo make application of the point, for informing of our minds, trying

of

of our ſtate, and directing of our thoughts and affections concerning Chriſt.

I. The *firſt* head propoſed is, To offer ſome *general remarks* for clearing of the doctrine.

1. *Remark*, "That man is a thoughtful, or a thinking creature." God created him with a thinking faculty, capable of diſcurſive thought and ratiocination; capable of rational cogitation concerning God, and ſpiritual objects, and celeſtial things; which beaſts, that have ſome ſort of thoughts, yet are not capable of. I need not inſiſt upon this; for ſome of you know, that even Pagan philoſophers are acquaint with this, and that heathen poets have inferred it from the very frame and ſtructure of the human body; as Ovid.

Pronaque cum ſpectant animalia cætera terram,
Os homini ſublime dedit: Cœlumque tueri
Juſſit, & erectos ad ſidera tollere vultus *.

META. lib. i. fab. 2.

Man was endowed above beaſts with a faculty capable of celeſtial contemplation. It is peculiar to the creatures called MEN and ANGELS, to think of God, and to think of Chriſt; other creatures are not capable of ſuch thoughts: this is plainly ſuppoſed in this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

2. *Remark*, "That man's thoughts, together with all "the faculties and powers of his ſoul, have got ſuch a "daſh by the fall of Adam, that they were ſet a wavering after other objects, beſides God the chief good: "yea, the fall in a manner daſhed out his brains; and "his head being broken, God went out of his head, "and the creature came in." Since that time, he could never have a right thought of God in his head: yea, *God is not in all his thoughts;* innumerable other things fill up the room which God ſhould have. *He created man upright, but he hath founa out many inventions*, inſomuch that now *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually*, Gen. vi. 5. The world, and the luſts

* *i. e.* "While other animals look downwards upon the earth, "the Creator gave man a lofty face; and ordered him to look "to heaven, and lift his countenance upright towards the ſtars."

thereof, do monopolize and ingroſs all the thoughts of the children of men, and God is thruſt out of them; there is no room for God, or the Son of God. This wrong ſet of thoughts is alſo here ſuppoſed in the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

3. *Remark*, "That whatever confuſed thoughts, and "dark apprehenſions men may naturally have, now in "their fallen ſtate, concerning God and his law, like "the confuſed chaos, Gen. i. 2. *Without form and void,* "*and darkneſs upon the face of the deep;* yet thoughts "of Chriſt, or of God in Chriſt, are what no man could "ever have had in the leaſt glimmering idea by nature, "without divine goſpel-revelation." Adam fallen retained ſome awful and terrible thoughts of God; but no thought could he ever have had of Chriſt, unleſs God had revealed him as *the ſeed of the woman* that was to *bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.* This is *the myſtery that was hid from ages and generations;* the *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh; God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf,* could not enter into our thoughts. Some natural impreſſions men have of God as a lawgiver, ſtanding upon terms of obedience with them, according to the firſt covenant, [namely, of works,] made with the firſt Adam; but God in Chriſt, as the *end of the law for righteouſneſs,* and *fulfilling the righteouſneſs of the law* in the ſinner's room, is ſuch a hidden myſtery, ſo far above the natural thoughts of man, that even where the objective revelation of this myſtery is made, without the ſubjective, internal, ſaving illumination in the knowledge thereof, men cannot have or entertain any due apprehenſions of it, but remain doting upon their legal dreams and imaginations concerning God, as in the old covenant-relation to them. This was evident in the Phariſees here, notwithſtanding of the goſpel-light they had both from the Old-Teſtament prophecies and promiſes of Chriſt, and from the rays of the Sun of righteouſneſs himſelf, now ariſen among them; ſtill they were doting upon the law, and had ſome dark thoughts of God with relation thereto; therefore Chriſt, to direct their thoughts in the only way to God, he leads them to himſelf. And as the diſciples themſelves,

being

being but partly enlightened herein, need to be directed in their faith and ſpiritual thoughts of God, that they be not legal, terminating upon God abſolutely, but evangelical upon Chriſt, or God in him, John xiv. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me;* ſo much more do blind Phariſees need to be directed to the right road, as here our Lord does. Ye think of God, but, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

4. *Remark.* "When Chriſt is revealed, people may "think of him, and yet think amiſs, unleſs their "thoughts be ſpiritualized by a ſupernatural change of "the mind, and ſaving illumination of their underſtanding in the knowledge of Chriſt." Thoughts may be conſidered as either rational and ſpeculative, which is juſt the work of the brain, and lies only in a bare theory of divine things; or, as practical and ſpiritually operative, which does not reſt in the head, but affects the heart, and ſets the affections in motion towards divine things, and raiſes the ſpiritual eſtimation thereof. Now, whatever thoughts of Chriſt the natural man may have in the former ſenſe, yet no ſuitable thoughts of Chriſt can he have in the latter ſenſe, till a ſupernatural change be wrought by ſaving illumination. It is as impoſſible in the black ſtate of nature to think upon Chriſt, or ſpiritual things, in a ſpiritual manner, as it is for a man that was born blind to judge of colours, or to be taken up with their beauty and luſtre; *The natural man receives not the things of God, they are fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned,* 1 Cor. ii. 14. This *diſcerning* he cannot have, till he be *tranſlated out of darkneſs to God's marvellous light,* and till the *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhine into his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt,* 2 Cor. iv. 6. People then may think of Chriſt, and yet think amiſs, without this ſaving illumination. This is alſo ſuppoſed here in the queſtion; for the Phariſees did not want ſome thoughts of Chriſt the Meſſias, and partly right thoughts too upon the matter, while they thought he was *the Son of David;* yet they were ſo far from being right thoughts of Chriſt, as God-man, and as to the

manner of thinking of him, that they had no due eſteem of the true Chriſt; nay, *He was deſpiſed and rejected of as a root out of a dry ground*, and as *having no form or comelineſs*, Iſa. ii. 3. And thus he is ſtill undervalued by multitudes, who yet judge they have right enough thoughts of Chriſt; they think of him, but think amiſs: and therefore the queſtion is not merely concerning the act of thinking, but the quality thereof; it is not, have you *any* thoughts of Chriſt; do you ever think of him? but it is, What think ye of him?

5. *Remark*, "That man's thoughts are within God's "juriſdiction, and under his authority." The commands of God extend not only to the outward, but the inward man of the heart, and conſequently further than ever any earthly command could go; where was there ever a monarch that could give out ſuch laws, as would bind the heart and thoughts of men? If any mortal ſhould make a law, that his ſubjects ſhould not dare, upon their peril, to welcome a traiterous thought againſt his royal perſon, otherwiſe he would be evanged upon them; really ſuch an one would deſerve to be laughed at for his pride and folly, more than Caligula, who threatened the air, if it durſt rain when he was at his paſtime, who yet durſt not look upon the air when it thundered. It were the height of madneſs, for any crowned head in the world, or potentate on earth, ſo far to forfeit their reaſon, as to think, that the thoughts of men's hearts were within their territories or juriſdiction: but behold, they are all under the authority of God; for his name is Καρδιογνώστης, *the Searcher of the heart*, Acts i. 24. and the *Trier of the reins of the children of men.* Think not that thoughts are free, any more than your words or actions before God. It is his prerogative to lay bands upon the inner man, and to *judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. ii. 16. who is here the catechiſt, putting the queſtion to you; and he is the fitteſt hand, for he knows what way your thoughts are running: he is the witneſs, and will be the judge of your thoughts, which are all under his juriſdiction. Therefore it is his unqueſtionable right, to call you to an account of your thoughts; thoughts are as viſible and evi-

dent

dent as actions to him; Heb. iv. 12, 13. *The Word of God,* [the essential Word, the *Word that was made flesh,*] *is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* He knows our thoughts afar off, even before we conceive them; and thoughts are actions before him: heart-thoughts are heart-acts, and real deeds in his sight; the adulterous thought, is adultery before him, and will be judged as such; the covetous thought, is idolatry before him; the malicious thought, is murder; and the unbelieving thought, is unbelief; the contemning thought of Christ, is contempt itself: he is an infinite Spirit, that sees your thoughts better than men see your actions; and therefore answer for your thoughts to him. *What think ye of Christ?*

6. *Remark,* "That as men may expect to be catechised and examined of God, with respect to their "thoughts, as well as their actions, so especially con-"cerning their thoughts of Christ." And as God will judge us by the thoughts we have of Christ, so we ought to try and judge ourselves by this rule; for as our thoughts are, so are we; yea, God's thoughts of us are according to our thoughts of Christ. If we think nothing of Christ, God thinks nothing of us; if we think highly of Christ, God thinks highly of us in him: for, as God's thoughts of Christ are very high and honourable, he being the Father's darling and delight, Isa. xlii. 5.; so, when our thoughts of Christ, in some measure, agree with God's thoughts of him, and we think highly and honourably of him, as God does; surely it is evident, that we have the Spirit of God; and that as God is well-pleased with Christ, so he is well-pleased with us in him. Now, if *our thoughts and hearts condemn* us in this matter, *God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things;* but *if our hearts and thoughts condemn us not, then we have confidence towards God,* 1 John iii. 20, 21. It is true, the natural conscience of men,

men, and their thoughts, may *accuſe or excuſe*, and ſo condemn or juſtify them, according as they do good or evil, Rom. ii. 15.; and to be thus condemned and juſtified, is no evidence of the man's ſtate before God; for this only ſhews the work of the law, written in our hearts by nature, even the covenant of works, which ſays, That *the doer of the law ſhall be juſtified*, ver. 13. and the breaker of the law condemned. Theſe are ſome of the beams of nature's light; all men may find themſelves condemned here, and they that think themſelves juſtified here before God, by their good deeds, they but diſcover their ignorance of the law, which condemns all vain and evil thoughts, as well as evil deeds; and therefore no man can have his heart and thoughts juſtifying him before God, nor a good conſcience or confidence towards God, till once he come to think duly of Chriſt, from whom the law hath got full ſatisfaction to all its commands and demands, and by whoſe blood the fiery law is exſtinguiſhed: the *conſcience being ſprinkled with that blood*, and *ſo purged from dead* legal *works to ſerve the living God*, the man hath *confidence towards God*, according to the meaſure of his faith, and regular thoughts of Chriſt. The more a man thinks upon the law, the more his thoughts condemn him, if he underſtood the ſpirituality of the law: but, the more he thinks of Chriſt, as *the end of the law for righteouſneſs*, the more will his thoughts and conſcience ſmile upon him, and give him confidence towards God; for, we *have boldneſs to enter into the holieſt*, and to come to a holy God, *by the blood of Jeſus*, Heb. x. 19. They that think much of themſelves, and think little or nothing of Chriſt, they are leaſt in the kingdom of heaven; yea, they are not of that kingdom at all; they deſpiſe Chriſt, and God deſpiſes them: but they that think little of themſelves, or think nothing of themſelves, but think much of Chriſt, and think every way highly and honourably of him, they are great in the kingdom of God; Chriſt is great in their eye, and they are great in God's eye, being *accepted in the Beloved*: therefore, the great queſtion is, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

II. The

II. The *ſecond* head propoſed, was, To ſhew the *import* of this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* That people may not deceive themſelves with paſſing thoughts they may have of Chriſt, I would more cloſely open up the meaning and import of the queſtion; and this being the main head upon the doctrinal part, we muſt explain the ſeveral branches of the queſtion, and ſo ſhew the import of it. 1. *Objectively*, with reſpect to the *object*, CHRIST. 2. *Actively*, with reſpect to the *act* of thinking. 3. *Formally*, with reſpect to the *quality* of the act, what ſort of a thought it is; *What* think ye of him? 4. *Subjectively*, with reſpect to the perſons that are the ſubjects, *ye*; *What think* YE *of Chriſt?*

1*ſt*, Then, I am to conſider the import of this queſtion, with reſpect to the *object*, or matter of our thoughts, namely, CHRIST: *What think ye of Chriſt?* And here I own it is impoſſible for me to go through all that I thought might be ſaid here: there are ſo many things in Chriſt, that I found to be the matter of the queſtion, he being *all in all*, and *all the fulneſs of the Godhead being in him*, that before ever I was aware, there were more than an hundred queſtions occurred to me, that might be put upon this one particular; and therefore I found a neceſſity of reſtricting myſelf. And though, if time allow, in the application I may, through grace, dilate upon ſome of theſe; yet at preſent I ſhall confine myſelf to what I judge preciſely to be the ſcope of the text and context, and the intent of the Spirit of God in this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* That is, 1 What think ye of his *righteouſneſs?* 2. What think ye of his *pedigree?* 3. What think ye of his *perſon?* 4. What think ye of his *anointing?* Theſe four, I ſuppoſe, we will find as the ſpecial import of the queſtion here.

[1.] What think ye of his *righteouſneſs?* This I place firſt, becauſe I judge, from what goes before, as the occaſion of this queſtion, that the great deſign of Chriſt therein was to lead off theſe ſelf-righteous Phariſees from the righteouſneſs of works and of the law, concerning which all their queſtions were put to him, and to lead them to another righteouſneſs, even to himſelf as the Lord their righteouſneſs, the end of the law. As if he had

had ſaid, You think to be juſtified by the deeds of the law; but, how is that poſſible, ſeeing *by the law is the knowledge of ſin?* Rom. iii. 20. If ye will ſtand cloſs to theſe old-covenant terms with God, then let the law itſelf catechiſe you. Where is your righteouſneſs of nature and practice, that the law requires? Where is your righteouſneſs of thought, word, and deed, that it requires? Where is your righteouſneſs of affection and action that it requires? Where is your perfect, perſonal, and perpetual obedience; your righteouſneſs internal in heart, external in life, and eternal in duration which the law requires? for, *Curſed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. The law will tell you, that though you keep it wholly, and *yet offend in one point*, you are *guilty of all*, James ii. 20. Now, is there no point wrong in your ſtate, nature, heart, or thought all your days, not to ſpeak of your words and actions? If there be, then you are guilty of all; and ſeeing by the law is the knowledge thus of your ſin and guilt, how can you be juſtified by the law? Can that holy righteous law pronounce you juſt and righteous? No, no: in vain do you think of righteouſneſs by the law: therefore, what think ye of Chriſt the Meſſias, who is called JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU; *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, Jer. xxiii. 6. It is he that came to *fulfil* the righteouſneſs of the law in his own perſon, really and actively, that *the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us*, imputatively and paſſively, Rom. viii. 4. Is not this the only righteouſneſs that *magnifies the law and makes it honourable?* You magnify your own righteouſneſs, which does but diſgrace and diſhonour the law; but, *what think ye of Chriſt?* Do you magnify and honour him, as *the Lord your righteouſneſs?* Ought not you to magnify that righteouſneſs that magnifies the law, ſeeing it is more than an angelical righteouſneſs? It is not the righteouſneſs of a man only, or of *David's ſon*; but the *righteouſneſs of God*, and of *David's Lord*. If you think no more of Chriſt but that he is *David's ſon*, no wonder than you be relying upon and following after the law, and a poor pitiful righteouſneſs of your own; you have never ſeen the glory of Chriſt's righteouſneſs:

but

but if you think duly of Chriſt, you will ſee him to be the LORD JEHOVAH, and his righteouſneſs to be a glorious divine righteouſneſs, ſo as you will *count all things but loſs and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of him, and to be found in him, not having your own righteouſneſs that is after the law, but the righteouſneſs which is of God*, in Chriſt *by faith*, Phil. ii. 8, 9. Let all your queſtions about the law then, might Chriſt ſay, give way to this great queſtion, *what think ye of Chriſt*, and his law-biding righteouſneſs? Your righteouſneſs will not abide the firſt fire of the law when it comes to be diſcharged againſt you, and to exact obedience and ſatisfaction; but Chriſt's obedience and death anſwers the whole charge of its precept and ſanction both to the full: therefore, *What think ye of Chriſt?* and what think ye of his righteouſneſs? This is the firſt thing imported in this queſtion, as it ſtands here.

[2.] What think ye of his *pedigree?* That this is imported in the queſtion, appears from the connexion alſo, *Whoſe ſon is he?* What think ye of his pedigree? They thought it was eaſy to anſwer that queſtion, by ſaying only, *He is David's ſon.* They might have known it was not ſo eaſy to anſwer that queſtion, if they had conſidered the queſtion of the prophet Iſaiah, chap. liii. 8. *Who ſhall declare his generation?* And the deſcription which that prophet gives of him, Iſa. ix. 6. that the name of the Meſſias, the child born, and ſon given to us, ſhould be, *Wonderful, Counſellor*, and *the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of peace.*—What think ye of his pedigree as he is *man?* No doubt this was partly implied in the queſtion; for Chriſt did not diſprove their anſwer, though it was but to the leaſt part of the queſtion: *He is David's ſon*, ſay they; and it is right to think of him as the ſon of David, cloathed with our nature: here was the *great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh.* It was no myſtery for the Phariſees to think only that he was the ſon of David; David had other ſons, and a numerous ſeed: and if that be all, that he was the ſon of David, they might thus think of Chriſt, and yet think nothing of him. But it is another thing to think of him as God in our nature. If

we think duly of Chriſt as the ſon of David, or in human nature, then, muſt we not think that God is come very near to us, ſo as there is a natural ſibneſs betwixt him and us, he being *bone of our bone, and fleſh of our fleſh?* Muſt we not think, that he wonderfully emptied himſelf of his divine glory, and humbled himſelf unto death? Though *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, yet he ſuffered himſelf to be denuded of his glory, cloathed with rags of our fleſh: God calls him *the man that is his Fellow;* yet he was made a fellow to thieves and malefactors, and a murderer preferred before him. Though he was *the Prince of life*, yet, as the word may be rendered, he EVACUATED or EMPTIED *himſelf unto death;* and yet, to them that know him, he is moſt lovely, even in his greateſt abaſement. What think ye of Chriſt as man, as the ſon of David, the ſon of man, a man of the ſame infirmities with us, except ſinful infirmities? *He was made in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted:* He became a poor man, in all outward reſpects; a diſtreſſed man, *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief;* a tempted man, toſſed and tempted of the devil ſometimes, he going through all the ages of a man, firſt conceived, then born, then a babe, then a youth, and at laſt the perfect ſtature of man: He became a mortal man, and accordingly was put to a painful and ſhameful death; yet a holy man, a wonderful man, a God-man: What think ye of the man Chriſt Jeſus?— But the main thing imported in the queſtion here with relation to his pedigree, is, What think ye of his pedigree, as he is *God?* What think ye of Chriſt, in this reſpect? For to ſeparate Chriſt from God, is to make him no Chriſt; therefore, the queſtion is, *What think ye of Chriſt*, whoſe ſon is he, with reſpect to his divine nature, as well as his human nature? That this was the import of the queſtion, appears from his reply to their anſwer, *How then does David call him Lord?* He is Lord JEHOVAH, the *only begotten Son of God*, John i. 18.; *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 2.; *by whom all things were made*, John i. 3. It is the Arian blaſphemy, to affirm him to be no more but *Omoiuſius patri*, but not *Omouſius;* that

is,

is, *like unto the Father*, but not the ſame eſſence and ſubſtance with him. He is, according to his Godhead, arrayed with all glory. All the creatures are to him as the *drop of a bucket:* yea, as *nothing, and leſs than nothing and vanity;* he hath a *name above every name;* and all the creatures are but ſhadows to him, who is the ſubſtantial image of God. He is the eternal Son of God, by an ineffable generation; whatever Arians and Atheiſts think of Chriſt; yet Chriſt himſelf *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6. Therefore, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is he no more but the ſon of David? The Jews looked upon Chriſt, as an ignorant clown, or ſilly perſon, will look upon the ſun; and, it may be, will think it no bigger than his bonnet; or at moſt, no larger than a milſtone: ſo did the Jews. The Phariſees looked upon the Son of God, ſaying, *Is not this the carpenter's ſon?* but their utmoſt was, that he was *the ſon of David;* they did not ſee him to be the Son of God. *What think ye of Chriſt?* Do ye ſee all the attributes of God to be in him? and all his actions, as Mediator, to be dignified with infinite virtue and value? that he was able to ſatisfy infinite juſtice? that *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt?* that he is the adequate object of divine worſhip, and a full ſuitable portion for an immortal ſoul, becauſe he is the Son of God, as well as the ſon of David? All this is imported in the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

[3.] What think ye of his *perſon?* This queſtion is alſo plainly imported in that, *What think ye of Chriſt*, namely, as he is God-man in one perſon, and the ſecond perſon of the glorious Trinity? It is plain, that Chriſt ſpeaks of himſelf here as perſonally conſidered, and as having two diſtinct natures in one perſon. Now, the human nature of Chriſt is not a perſon diſtinct from the divine; though the natures are diſtinct, the perſon is one. But the anſwer of the Phariſees to this queſtion, ſhewed they had no diſtinct knowledge of this myſtery; for they anſwer, *He is the ſon of David;* without knowing that he was the Son of God, as well as the ſon of David, in one perſon; which made Chriſt here to declare his ſovereign Lordſhip and Godhead, as well as

his manhood. The myſtery of the queſtion then, which they did not underſtand, was, What think ye of that wonderful perſon God-man, in whom the human nature is advanced to ſuch an unſpeakable dignity, as to be united to, and of the ſame perſonality with the Son of God? Here is matter of thought to an intelligent mind; What think ye of the wonderful manner, in which ſinful men may come to be *partakers of the divine nature*, even by the holy Son of God his being a partaker of the human nature? Here is a glorious ſubject for thought and contemplation. What think ye of the wonderful way, that God, in his infinite wiſdom, hath taken, to bring God and men together, even in and through him, who is both God and man, and partaking of both natures in one perſon, is fit for bringing both God and man into one, and to lay his hand upon both parties? What think ye of ſuch a glorious perſon as finite and infinite, time and eternity, Creator and creature joined together? *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14.

[4.] What think ye of his *unction* or anointing? This, I ſuppoſe, muſt alſo be the import of the queſtion objectively conſidered, as it is here generally propoſed; for, Chriſt ſignifies *Anointed;* in the Hebrew it is Meſſias; in the Greek, it is Chriſt; and in our language it is the Anointed: and this being the main word, on which the weight of the general queſtion itſelf lies, it is the more neceſſary that this be particularly opened.—The queſtion then comes to this in general, What think ye of his *Father*, the Anointer? John vi. 27. *For him hath God the Father ſealed;* How? See Pſalm xlv. 7. *God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.* How much pains is Chriſt at, in the goſpel, to recommend his Father, as ſending and authorizing him to his mediatorial work?—Again, What think ye of his *office*, to which he is anointed? He hath not taken the honour of the mediatorial office upon him, without being called of God, and anointed of God thereunto, Heb. v. 5. We do not think honourably enough

of

of any of his saving offices, unless we, at the same time, apprehend his divine unction thereunto. — Again, it comes to this, What think ye of his *Spirit*, the ointment, wherewith he is anointed? Isa. lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for he hath anointed me.* Isa. xlii. 1. *I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*——There is the meaning of the question in general, with respect to this Christ, who is the subject-matter of the question: but there is much in this name CHRIST, and more than we can tell; I only name some particulars further here imported.

1. What think ye of his *prophecy* and *teaching?* For, as Christ, he is anointed to be a Prophet: *Who teaches like him?* says Elihu, Job xxxvi. 22. Other prophets and teachers have no wisdom but what he gives them; but, *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Other prophets may err, but he teaches infallibly: for he is the truth itself; *full of grace and truth.* Other teachers may be dashed, but he teaches authoritatively; *he speaks as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.* Other teachers may fail in their design, and prove unsuccessful in their work; but he teaches efficaciously; men work upon a capacity, but he can give a capacity; *The entrance of his words giveth light; he gives understanding to the simple.* The *excellency* of his teaching is singular, if we consider his ability and fidelity; the *matter* of his teaching is singular, if we consider it is the whole will of God for our salvation; the *manner* of his teaching is singular, if we consider it by his word and Spirit? and even by a human voice he can convey his divine power; the *extent* of his teaching is singular, if we consider it extends to all sorts of persons, Jews and Gentiles, and to all sorts of things necessary to eternal life: this anointing teaches *all things*, 1 John ii. 27. In a word, none have authority to teach, but by commission from him; neither can any other teacher preach himself; *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord;* and, *To him gave all the prophets witness:* but it is his prerogative alone, to preach himself, saying, *Come to me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Look to me and be saved: I am the*

rose

roſe of Sharon; I am the light of the world; I am the way, the truth, and the life. O then, was there ever any prophet or teacher that could compete with him? *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,* ſays Chriſt, *for he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the meek.* He is the Chriſt, the anointed prophet; and, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

2. What think ye of his *prieſthood?* for, as Chriſt, he is anointed to be a *Prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchiſedeck.* All the Levitical prieſts were but ſhadows and types of him who was the true Prieſt, the true Temple, the true Altar, the true Sacrifice, all in one. What high thoughts may we have of his oblation, or *obedience unto death, even the death of the croſs?* For here was the grand condition of the covenant of redemption, or grace, fulfilled. The covenant of grace was all grace with reſpect to God, who, of his grace, found out the ranſom; and with reſpect to us, who are *ſaved by grace:* but, with reſpect to Chriſt, it is a covenant made upon terms and conditions, namely, his obedience, righteouſneſs, paſſion, and oblation; *Whom God hath ſet forth to be the propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt,* Rom. iii. 25. O what a free, full, perfect holy, ſweet, and ſatisfying ſacrifice did he offer up of himſelf, even a *ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour unto God,* whereby juſtice was ſatisfied, wrath appeaſed, ſin expiated, God atoned, death vanquiſhed, hell quenched, heaven purchaſed, and the devil's kingdom deſtroyed; for, *by death he deſtroyed him that had the power of death,* that is, *the devil!* What may we think of his interceſſion, grounded upon this oblation? *For he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him, becauſe he ever lives to make interceſſion.* Here is the antidote againſt all charges and accuſations, Rom. viii. 33, 34.; the antidote againſt all temptations, Heb. ii. 17, 18. iv. 14, 15.; an antidote againſt all the ſnares of the world, John xvii. 15.; againſt all ſins, failings, and infirmities, 1 John ii. 1, 2.; againſt all fears, through ſenſe of unworthineſs, to draw near to God's throne of grace, Heb. iv. 15, 16. x. 19, —22.; and againſt all fears of apoſtacy and falling away,

John

John xvii. 11. O Sirs, his promiſe, his power, his prayer, give great ſecurity, and greater cannot be given: he hath prayed for the Spirit, and the conſtant abiding thereof, John xiv. 16, 17. ſee alſo John iv. 14. Chriſt's interceſſion is founded on his oblation; and the Father is ſo well-pleaſed with the oblation, that he cannot refuſe his interceſſion; nay, *he hears him always.* Therefore, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

3. What think ye of his *kingdom* and *royalty?* The queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* imports this alſo; for, as Chriſt, he is anointed to be a King; *I have ſet my King,* [or, as it is in the Hebrew, ANOINTED *my King,*] *upon my holy hill of Zion,* Pſal. ii. 6. Is not *all power in heaven and earth committed unto him,* having on his veſture and thigh this name written, KING OF KINGS, *and* LORD OF LORDS? He is *the King eternal and immortal;* the *government is upon his ſhoulders;* and *of the increaſe of his kingdom and government there ſhall be no end.* His *delivering up the kingdom to the Father at laſt,* is but a changing the *manner* of his adminiſtration, and delivering up all his members, of whom his kingdom conſiſts, unto his Father, to be eternally crowned and glorified: he will reign through eternity, and the *children of Zion will be joyful in their King,* and ſing thro' eternity. I might here ſhew what a powerful and peaceable, mild and merciful, wiſe and holy, juſt and righteous King our Lord Jeſus is; and then aſk you, *What think ye of Chriſt?* But it is not poſſible to give ſo much as a hint at the thouſandth part of his glory and royalty. His kingdom is ſpiritual and internal: if you be his ſpiritual ſubjects, his *kingdom is within you;* yea, though you be yet ſubjects to the devil, he hath power over all hearts, and can ſoften the hardeſt, and bind the ſtouteſt, and make the people fall down under him: yea, as he is able, ſo he is willing; for, he is not only the God of power, but *the prince of peace,* Iſa. ix. 6.; and therefore, as a *Prophet,* he preaches peace; as a *Prieſt,* he purchaſes peace; and, as a *King,* he proclaims peace; yea, *Creates the fruit of the lips peace; peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is nigh.* As a powerful Potentate, he is able; and, as a Prince of peace, he is ready,

ready, to ſave to the uttermoſt. As he is full of power, ſo he is full of pity; and his power and peace both are joined together, for the encouragement of ſinners to come to him; *Let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*, Iſa. xxvii. 5.—Perhaps, by the bye, ſome poor ſoul is thinking, Oh! but I have no ſtrength to take hold of his ſtrength. Well, it is right to think ſo of yourſelf, and of your own weakneſs and wickedneſs: but no ſtrength comes in by that thought, while poring on yourſelf only; that is but the half of what you are to think, when you think right of yourſelves, as weak and wicked. But, what think ye of Chriſt our glorious King? If you can think honourably of him, as able and willing to help you, O then you would find ſtrength coming in with ſuch a thought: and high thoughts of a powerful and merciful King JESUS, is one of the ways of taking hold of his ſtrength. If you ſuppoſe that you think he is able and ready, and yet you find no ſtrength coming in, O Sirs, ſuſpect your own thought of him, that it is but a miſbelieving and diſhonourable thought: for, I aſſure you, right thoughts of Chriſt will ſet the heart all in motion towards him. But now, O! there would be no end in ſpeaking of the royalties of King JESUS; his royal throne, his royal crown, his royal victories, his royal triumphs, and the royal entertainment that he gives to his ſubjects at his table above, and even below, when he brings them to his banquetting-houſe. I ſhall only add, that it is ſaid of Solomon, *there was no king like him;* ſo, behold a *greater than Solomon is here:* there is no king like him who is the *King of Zion;* he he hath all other kings under his check and controul; and, what think ye of Chriſt then? Other kings have their dominions, for the moſt part, by uſurpation, by encroachment: but Chriſt is King conſtitute of his Father; *I will make him my firſt-born, higher than the kings of the earth*, Pſal. lxxxix. 27.; and all this for the good of the people: *He hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things unto his church*, Eph. ii. 22. This leads to another import of the queſtion; that is,

4. What

4. What think ye of his *authority* and *ability*, *commiſſion*, *fulneſs*, *furniture*, and *fitneſs* for executing theſe ſaving offices? For all this is implied in the deſignation CHRIST, *the anointed*; that is, one commiſſionated and qualified of God, by a ſupereminent unction, John iii. 34. Behold his excellency here, above all that ever had the like offices. Behold he is anointed, for the concurrence of all theſe offices, whether general, as Saviour, Surety, and Redeemer; or particular, as Prophet, Prieſt, and King. Some have been prophets, ſome prieſts, ſome kings anointed; but never any was anointed to all theſe but Chriſt: *What think ye of Chriſt?*—Behold the *matter* of his anointing; others have been anointed with material oil, but he is anointed with holy oil, the holy Spirit.—And whereas others have had the Spirit in ſome reſpects, therefore behold the *meaſure* of his anointing; others were anointed in meaſure, but he *without* meaſure; they may have a fulneſs of ſufficiency, but he hath a fulneſs of redundancy; they a fulneſs like the fulneſs of a veſſel, but his the fulneſs of an ocean; they a plenitude, but he a fountain.—Behold and view the *duration* of his anointing; his ſaints and ſervants may have the Spirit ſometimes working, ſometimes ceaſing, ſometimes flowing, and ſometimes ebbing; but Chriſt is anointed with an enduring unction, John i. 33. The Spirit that deſcended on him, did remain and reſt upon him; ſee Iſa. lix. 22.—Hence behold alſo the *equality* of his anointing with himſelf: the Spirit given to others, that were inveſted with an office in God's houſe, did work with them as mere men; there was no equality betwixt them and the Spirit given to them: but as Chriſt is anointed with the Spirit, as he is Mediator, God-man; ſo, as to God, he is co-equal with the Spirit, wherewith he is anointed; yea, the ſame in ſubſtance, equal in power and in glory with the Father and with the Holy Ghoſt. And, *What think ye of Chriſt?* his authority, ability, and furniture for his work?—In a word, behold the *efficacy* of his anointing; and the communicable nature thereof: *He is anointed above his fellows*; yet ſo, as he hath fellows to whom he allows fellowſhip in the ſame anointing: he hath not only re-

ceived the Spirit of all grace and gifts for himſelf, but *he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious*, Pſal. lxvii. 18. Hence, according to his pleaſure, he allows the oil to drop down to the ſkirts of his garment; yea, *like rain upon the mown graſs, or ſhowers that water the earth*, Pſal. lxxii. 6. It is true, miniſters anointed with the Spirit are to drop, Ezek. xx. 46. *Son of man, drop thy words towards the ſouth;* and Moſes ſays, *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain:* but as the clouds from whence the rain deſcends have not their water originally in themſelves, but from the ſea, and moiſt places of the earth, exhaled and drawn up by the heat of the ſun; ſo, no miniſter of Chriſt hath a faculty of teaching heavenly and divine things, and ſaving goſpel-truths of himſelf; but it is drawn up out of Chriſt, as out of a full ſea and ocean of all wiſdom and knowledge: and is conveyed unto them by the heat and vigour, not of their own ſpirit, but the Spirit of Chriſt, who is anointed, to anoint others. And, O for a liberal ſhare of his anointing among us at this occaſion!—In a word, the name *Chriſt* imports ſuch an anoining, as that he is qualified with all authority and ability, all furniture and fittedneſs for his work of ſaving ſinners; with all fulneſs of divine perfections, and all fulneſs of mediatorial gifts and graces: and all this is imported in the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

5. What think ye of his *aromatical ſavour?* for this is his name, *Chriſt, the Anointed;* his ointment caſts a perfume through heaven and earth. How ſavoury is he to God? Why, his *ſacrifice was a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour unto his Father*, Eph. v. 2. The ſtinking ſmell of ſin is extinguiſhed thereby; and the perſons and performances of believers perfumed: and hence, how ſavoury alſo to believers? Song i. 3, 5. *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.* Were it no more but the name JESUS a SAVIOUR, may it not be ſo delightful to ſinners, as to cauſe their hearts to leap within them when they hear it; as John leapt in his mother's womb for joy, at the voice of the bleſſed virgin's ſalutation? Luke i. 44. O! what think ye of the ſweet name JESUS! It ſhould

even

even pluck your heart out of your boſom, and tranſplant it into the boſom of Chriſt. How delightful is the very naming of a temporal Saviour to them that are in miſery, when they hear of his ability and readineſs to deliver them? And, may not your heart even exult within you for joy, when you hear us ſpeak to you of ſuch a Saviour, that ſaves from ſin and wrath? O ſweet-ſmelling name! O have you no ſenſe of ſmelling! *What think ye of Chriſt?*

6. What think ye of his *beauty* and *comelineſs?* This is alſo imported in his name CHRIST, and ſo in the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt*, the Anointed? *Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart*, ſays Solomon, Prov. xxvii. 6. Now, Chriſt is *anointed with the oil of gladneſs*, Pſal. xlv. 7.; and *a glad heart makes a chearful countenance*; yea, *Oil makes the face to ſhine*, Pſal. civ. 15. A ſaint, that hath but a ſprinkling of this oil, how will his face ſhine, and his countenance, like Hanna's, be no more ſad? How did Moſes's face ſhine when ſome of this oil was upon him? But, O what think ye of the ſhining glory and comelineſs of Chriſt, who is anointed from head to foot! Is he not *altogether lovely?* Is he not *white and ruddy, the Chief among ten thouſands?* Is he not a perfect beauty? All God's fulneſs is in him; all God's beauty is in him; all God's glory is to be ſeen in the face of Jeſus, 2 Cor. iv. 9. O then, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

7. What think ye of his *worth* and *preciouſneſs?* This is alſo imported in the name CHRIST, and ſo in the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt*, the *Anointed?* for it is *precious ointment*, Pſal. cxxxiii. 2. Ointment was reckoned of great worth and eſteem among the Jews; it was among the precious preſents that were ſent unto kings, Iſa. lvii. 9. Hoſ. xii. 1. O how great is the preciouſneſs and worth of Chriſt! It is the delight and recreation, the ſtudy and occupation of elect angels, to pry into the preciouſneſs of Chriſt, to look upon the frame and fabric of ſalvation to mankind-ſinners by Chriſt, that they may therein obſerve the glorious attributes of God: his wiſdom, power, holineſs, juſtice, truth, mercy, all ſhining and glittering in it, like bright

ſtars in the firmament. Let a profane world think what they will of Chriſt; let them ſlight him and his goſpel; let them ſcorn him, and caſt him at their heels; let them trample on his blood and paſſion, as their manner is, making it a common and worthleſs thing; let them deſpiſe his high and celeſtial myſteries: we need not care for their thoughts; it is enough that God the Father hath honoured and exalted him; that the holy angels do reverence and worſhip him; and that all the ſaints do magnify him: *To them that believe he is precious.* O! his blood is precious blood, his promiſes are precious promiſes, his love is precious love; and every thing about him is precious: *What think ye of Chriſt?*

8. Again, to add no more here, what think ye of his *virtue* and *uſefulneſs?* This, I ſuppoſe, is alſo imported in the name CHRIST, and in the queſtion objectively conſidered, *What think ye of Chriſt, the Anointed?* For, as ointment was, and is of manifold uſefulneſs, ſo is Chriſt: eſpecially oil hath a twofold virtue, (1.) A *molifying* virtue, and a ſoftening quality; ſuch is the virtue of Chriſt. Were the heart never ſo hard, he can ſoften and molify it; a drop of that oil with which he is anointed, I mean, the ſmalleſt ſaving motion of his Spirit, can melt and diſſolve the heart, tho' it were harder than a ſtone or adamant, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. (2.) It hath a *medicinal* virtue; hence it is ſaid of the Samaritan, Luke x. 34. that he *poured in oil into the wounds* of the diſtreſſed man. Chriſt is the tender-hearted Samaritan; his blood and Spirit is the ointment for curing all the wounds that we have got by the old ſerpent. What wounds, what plagues, what deadly diſeaſes and deſperate maladies are among you! Behold, there is no diſeaſe out of hell that ſurmounts the medicinal virtue that is in Chriſt! O then, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Is there none here to think highly of him?——Now, theſe particulars that I have mentioned are imported in the very name CHRIST, and ſo implied in the queſtion objectively conſidered, or with reſpect to the object thereof, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

2*dly*, The *ſecond* thing here propoſed, was, to ſhew the import of this queſtion *actively* conſidered, or with reſpect

reſpect to the *act* of thinking; *What* THINK *ye of Chriſt?* Now, the full import of this queſtion, thus viewed, may comprehend more than people are ready to imagine. It is not a paſſing thought, or fleeting imagination; we ought not to explain the words of Chriſt by the motions and notions of our own ſpirits: we need the Spirit of Chriſt to explain the words of Chriſt according to the mind of Chriſt, 1 Cor. ii. 17. We may be ſure, as the apoſtle ſays, 2 Cor. ii. 5. that *we are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves, our ſufficiency muſt be of God.* And if we can think of nothing aright of ourſelves, far leſs can we think of Chriſt: and as none can ſpeak duly of Chriſt, nor call Jeſus LORD, without the Spirit; ſo neither can we think duly of Chriſt, without the Spirit of Chriſt. What then is the meaning of this queſtion relating to its *act* of thinking, *What* THINK *ye of Chriſt?* There are theſe following particulars, which, I ſuppoſe, are implied therein; and which I alſo propoſe by way of *Query*, that you may ſtill ſearch yourſelves, and apply as we go along.

1. *What think ye of Chriſt?* That is, What *know* ye of Chriſt? what *underſtand* ye of Chriſt? Surely ye cannot have a right thought of that which ye do not know or underſtand. Have you got the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Chriſt?* Eph. i. 17. Hath *the God, who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhined into your hearts, to give you the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt?* Hath God *revealed his Son in you?* Gal. i. 16. Have you *ſeen the Son?* He that ſees the natural ſun in the firmament, hath a thought of it ſuitable to the ſight he hath thereof: but a man that hath been born blind, and never ſaw the light, he cannot have a right notion or thought of the ſun, though you ſhould ſpeak never ſo much of the glory of it to him. I have heard of a man born blind, on whom a great deal of pains was taken to let him underſtand what a glorious creature the ſun was, and what bright beams and rays it ſends forth through all the world; but he was ſo far from having any right thoughts about it, that, after all the pains taken on him that was poſſible, he crys out, "O now, ſays he, I know what

"it

" it is like, it is juſt like the ſound of a trumpet." Poor man! that was the beſt notion he could frame about it, for he never had eyes. So it is here, Sirs; we are all born blind, having no ſpiritual eyes till God open the eyes of the underſtanding, and enlighten the mind in the knowledge of Chriſt: we may ſpeak of his glory and excellency; but the beſt you make of him is, O he is like a very ſtately and majeſtic perſon as ever ye ſaw or heard tell of! and ſo you frame the image of a very great man, ſitting on a lofty throne, compaſſed about with ſo many ſparling attendants in fine robes: and what you have heard with your natural ears of any perſon, or ſeen with your natural eyes, or can conceive with your natural underſtanding and reaſon, helps you to, or furniſhes you with materials for framing ſuch a notion of him. But what is all this? It is nothing but an image of your own brain, a carnal fantaſtical thought; the true Chriſt is the *image of the inviſible God*, the *wiſdom of God*, and the *power of God*, God-man in one perſon. Now, have you got a ſpiritual diſcerning; for, *The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; they are fooliſhneſs to him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* The world cannot think of Chriſt, far leſs think much of him, becauſe they do not know him: like Æſop's cock, contenting himſelf with, and thinking more of a barley-corn than of a pearl, becauſe he knew not the worth of it; ſo the world think more of a barley-corn of temporal good things, than they think of the *Pearl of great price*, becauſe they know it not. Therefore the queſtion imports, what *know* ye of Chriſt?

2. *What think ye of Chriſt?* That is, What *believe* ye of Chriſt? Knowledge and faith are like the two eyes of the ſoul: knowledge is the diſcerning and apprehending eye; faith is the applying and appropriating eye. And as ſaving knowledge is objective faith, and ſaving faith fiducial knowledge; ſo without knowledge we cannot think duly of Chriſt, with reſpect to what he is in himſelf; and without faith we cannot think duly of Chriſt, with reſpect to what he is to us, ſo as to receive the record of God, namely, *That God hath given*

us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John v. 11. Which record, *Whoſoever believeth not, hath made God a liar,* ver. 10. That the queſtion concerns this believing thought of Chriſt, is plain from the context, wherein Chriſt ſhows they had but unworthy thoughts of him, if they did not ſee him to be *David's Lord,* that is, the *true God, and eternal life;* in and through whom, as the God-man, this life was to be conveyed from God to man. This queſtion then is a trial of our faith, which *faith is the evidence of things not ſeen.* And, I ſuppoſe, one of the reaſons why Chriſt here ſays, *What think ye of* CHRIST? and not, *What think ye of* ME? is, becauſe, though now they were ſpeaking to him, and ſeeing him with their bodily eyes; yet their faith was not to terminate on what was the object of their ſenſe. We have no more faith than an ox or a horſe, if we believe no more than we ſee or feel: the brute beaſts think they have what they find they have by ſeeing and feeling; but what do you, that are rational creatures, think of things that cannot be ſeen or felt? *Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen.* The Phariſees here, they ſaw Chriſt, they ſaw his miracles; but yet, for all that, they ſaw not the true Chriſt by faith, while they ſaw not his inviſible glory, his inviſible Godhead, nor the inviſible ſeal appended to his commiſſion for ſaving ſinners. Therefore it is not, *What think ye of* ME? Your eyes ſee me, as if I were no more but a man like yourſelf: but, *What think ye of* CHRIST? Do you believe no more of Chriſt than you ſee? If ſo, then you have no right thoughts of Chriſt at all, becauſe you have no faith. My friends, the queſtion concerns you alſo: it is not, what ſee or feel you of Chriſt? but, *What believe ye of Chriſt?* There is a threefold ſeeing or feeling, that is to be ſeparate from believing.

(1.) The *firſt* is a *corporeal* ſeeing or feeling. Thomas thought it a better way to believe Chriſt to be riſen by ſeeing and feeling him, than by running to the promiſes without ſight of him; and we all naturally follow him: but Chriſt tells him, that the beſt and moſt bleſſed way was quite contrary to that; *Bleſſed are they that*

that have not ſeen, and yet have believed, John xx. 29. Again,

(2.) There is a *rational* ſeeing, that is to be ſeparate from believing. Though none can believe, without the exerciſe of their rational faculties ſpiritualized; and though it be the higheſt reaſon to believe what God ſpeaks; yet to make natural reaſon the rule or ground of faith, is not to believe at all, but the way to doubt of all that ever God ſaid. Thomas conſulted with reaſon, and reaſon conſulted with death and the grave, whether they could ſend their gueſts away back and live again into the world; and ſo he believed not. If Abraham had not ſeparated the ſight of reaſon from his faith in the promiſed ſeed, where would his faith have been? Natural reaſon might ſay, "Hark you, Abraham; is it "poſſible that you and Sarah can now have a ſon be-"twixt you, when you are both come to ſuch an age, "that you are but dead ſtocks?" But, when reaſon began to ſpeak, Abraham ſtopt his ears; *He conſidered not the deadneſs of his own body, nor of Sarah's womb: He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in the faith, giving glory to God; being fully perſuaded that he that had promiſed was able to perform*, Rom. iv. 19, 20, 21. Perhaps, reaſon is whiſpering into the ears of ſome here, ſaying, O man, woman, you are but a dead ſtock, a dead ſtone; do you ever think to be a child of Abraham, or that you will bring forth fruit unto God? But, if you, believe with Abraham, you will ſay, Hold your peace, carnal reaſon, you are but a blind fool in the matters of God: cannot *God out of ſtones raiſe up children unto Abraham?* And as he is able, ſo he hath given me many promiſes in his word, which he allows me to build upon, and commands me to believe. Unbelief builds always upon ſenſe and reaſon; but faith builds upon the power and promiſe of God. What *believe* you of Chriſt?

(3.) There is a *ſpiritual* ſeeing that is to be ſeparated from faith. It is true, there is a ſpiritual ſeeing of ſanctified knowledge and underſtanding, which I ſpoke of already, that is eſſential to faith; there can be no believing without this ſeeing: *He that ſees the Son, and*

believes

believes in him, hath everlaſting life. But there is a ſpiritual ſeeing of experience, or experimental ſenſe and feeling, which is to be ſeparate from believing; ſuch as ſpiritual mourning, ſpiritual joy, ſpiritual enlargement, or ſuch like workings of the Spirit. Where theſe are, they ſhould indeed be cheriſhed with thankfulneſs, as being a taſte of heaven, and a comfortable means of glorifying God on earth: but it is dangerous to make them the ground of faith; for they are ebbing and flowing, up and down, it may be twenty times in the ſpace of one ſermon; and your faith that is built thereupon will be up and down therewith. If you believe no longer than you ſee and feel, no wonder that you be always doubting when you are not feeling. And ſo you are never living by faith; for you are not properly believing, when you are feeling; faith is one thing and feeling another: or, if you build partly on the feeling of God's work within you, and partly on the truth of God's word without you, then you are like one that would build a houſe partly upon thawing ice, and partly on a firm rock; ſurely that part of the houſe, that was built on the ice, will tumble down whenever the ice melts: but, were the building of faith wholly upon the firm rock, that changes not with the changes of your ſenſe and feeling, you will find no more cauſe of doubting when you have, than when you want theſe changeable things: you would be thankful when you have them, and yet not doubtful when you want them. Unbelief, which builds upon things ſeen and felt, ſays and thinks, in the want of theſe, O! all is good, and ſo razeth the foundation; but faith, which *is the evidence of things not ſeen*, ſays, even in the want of theſe, all is yet well and ſecure, Chriſt is what he was, the promiſe is what it was, the truth of God is what it was, however I be changed. Theſe are the different thoughts of faith and unbelief; and what think ye? I ſuppoſe, when the meaning of the queſtion is, what believe ye of Chriſt? the moſt part will find, that either they have no faith, or very little.

Thus Paul believed contrary to ſenſe and feeling, when he got the promiſe of his own life, and the life

of all that were in the ſhip with him; *I believe God*, ſays he, *that it ſhall even be as it was told me*, Acts xxvii. 25. See in what circumſtances he was, when he thus believed, verſes 15, 18, 20.; their light was gone, the tempeſt was on them, and all hope from outward appearance was gone; yet Paul was aſſured and perſuaded that God would do as he had ſaid: why, might unbelief ſay, if the ſun were ſhining, and a fair wind blowing; if the Sun of righteouſneſs were ſhining on me, and the wind of heavenly influence blowing, and I were fair before the wind, then I would believe: but now, when there is nothing but darkneſs and tempeſts, how can I believe? No, indeed, you cannot, while you make ſenſe and feeling the ground of your faith, and not the truth and veracity of God in his word of grace and promiſe. Thus it is in the matter of juſtification before God. The believer is to look upon himſelf as righteous, through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; to believe himſelf perfect in Chriſt, and fiducially to think himſelf righteous in Chriſt: no, ſays unbelief, I cannot think that, becauſe I feel the contrary; I feel my own unrighteouſneſs, ſin, and corruption: why, if there were no ſenſe or feeling of ſin, there would be no room for faith; if you had a righteouſneſs of your own, and a feeling thereof, then you would have no need of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; but now, that you have a feeling of your unrighteouſneſs and ſin, there is room for faith, according to ſuch a word as that, 2 Cor. v. 21. *He hath made him to be ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* The very eſſence of faith here is to believe the quite contrary to what we ſee and feel in ourſelves, ſaying, In myſelf I have no righteouſneſs, no ſtrength; but, *Surely in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.*—Now, though I ſhould ſhew no more of the import of this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* but theſe two, namely, What know ye of Chriſt? and what believe ye of Chriſt? Surely it is a matter of eternal conſequence to anſwer this queſtion, thus explained; for if you miſs the anſwer to theſe two branches of this queſtion, your doom at the great day will be dreadful; 2 Theſſ. i. 7, 8. *He will be revealed from heaven in flaming*

ing

ing fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not the goſpel; that is, who never had ſuch thoughts of Chriſt, as to know him, and believe in him as the Chriſt of God. Again,

3. *What think ye of Chriſt?* That is, What *love* ye of Chriſt, and what favour have ye for him? As they that know him will believe, and put their truſt in him; ſo, they that believe in him, will love him; for, *faith works by love.* It muſt be a loving thought, that Chriſt here intended by this queſtion, while in the context he ſets forth himſelf, not only as David's ſon, but David's Lord; a God-man, and ſo a glorious object of love, *altogether lovely.* Were our affections enlarged wider than the higheſt heaven, there is lovelineſs enough in God-man to fill it; and could our hearts hold an ocean of love, there is infinite lovelineſs in Chriſt to beſtow it all upon: every thing in Chriſt is lovely; and therefore the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* muſt be, What *love* ye of Chriſt? *If any man love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be* ANATHEMA MARAN-ATHA, ſays the apoſtle; ſurely they are not believers, that are not lovers of Chriſt. It is true, Chriſt hath many pretended lovers, that love him only for his bounty, but not for his beauty, and that ſay they love him; but it is not ſo, if you conſider the qualities of their love.

(1.) It is an *eaſy* love, they came eaſily by it, without ever getting their natural enmity diſcovered or broken: they were never humbled for their want of love; ſuch a love is of little value; yea, no worth a farthing. Or,

(2.) It is an *idle* love; it does not lead them to his ſervice, no draw them to their prayers; his commands are ſtill grievous to them, and they have no pleaſure and delight in them. Or,

(3.) If it be not an idle, it is a *legal* love: it may be the law comes to them, and ſays, as Pharoah ſaid to the Iſraelites, *Ye are idle, ye are idle,* Exod. v. 17.; and ſo they fall a-doing for their life, according to the DO and LIVE of the firſt covenant. But it is not doing from love to Chriſt: it is not a goſpel-love to him, as a *Law-fulfiller;* but a legal love to him, as only a *Law-giver,*

and as if he was ſtill ſtanding upon the old-covenant terms with them. Or,

(4.) If it be not a legal love, it is a *looſe* and *licentious* love they have to him: it is love with a latitude, allowing as much room for the devil, as for Chriſt; as much room for the world, as for Chriſt; and as much room for luſts, as for Chriſt: ſurely, they that have no other love to Chriſt, but ſuch an eaſy, idle, legal, looſe, or licentious love, they are not true lovers; nay, they are true haters of him, and enemies to him. Let them ſay as they will, that they love Chriſt, yet in reality they think nothing of him.

But, believer, *What think you of Chriſt?* When the meaning of the queſtion to you is, *Simon, ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me more than theſe?* O! can you anſwer it with an appeal, *Thou that knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee?* or, at leaſt, can you anſwer it with a ſigh, Wo's me that I cannot love him as I ought! Surely, if you have not a love of delight, rejoicing in him; ye have a love of deſire, lamenting after him. Sometimes the loving ſoul goes to a communion, and the ſecret groan is, Oh! let me find Chriſt at this occaſion! Oh! I muſt have him, I muſt have him! Why *muſt* you have him? Even becauſe he muſt have you; *Other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold; theſe alſo I* MUST *bring, and they ſhall hear my voice*, John x. 16. He hath ſaid firſt, I *muſt* have you; and that hath brought you to ſay, I *muſt* have him. Here are two neceſſities meeting; his neceſſity, and your neceſſity: his neceſſity, indeed, is a pure neceſſity of *love;* but your firſt neceſſity was the neceſſity of *want:* but, ſince he from *love* hath a need of you, as well as you from *want* have a need of him, you muſt of neceſſity meet together in love. *You love him, becauſe he firſt loved you;* you ſeek him, becauſe he firſt ſought you. Therefore henceforth, as he ſeeks you from love, ſo do you not only ſeek him from want, that is too ſelfiſh; but alſo let your way of ſeeking him grow up to more conformity to his way of ſeeking you, namely, from love, ſaying, *Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? tell him that I am ſick of love.* O! what think ye, what love ye of Chriſt? Again,

4. *What*

4. *What think ye of Chriſt?* That is, What *eſteem* ye of Chriſt, or what eſtimate and valuation have you for him? This is plainly imported in the queſtion here. Why might Chriſt ſay, ye Phariſees are ſhewing your ignorant eſteem of the law, by all the queſtions you are propoſing about it; but, *What think ye of Chriſt*, who is the Lord of the law, as well as David's ſon and Lord? You have an ignorantly high opinion of Moſes; but, *What think ye of Chriſt?* what honour and reſpect do you put up him? Surely, *to them that believe he is precious*; or, as the word imports, he is HONOURABLE. Where there is true knowledge of Chriſt, there is faith; where there is faith, there is love; and where there is love, there is a high eſteem. Some things, the more they known, the leſs they are eſteemed: but it is not ſo with Chriſt; they that know him moſt, do eſteem him moſt; God the Father knows him beſt, and he eſteems him moſt highly, Iſa. xlii. 1. Saints and angels in heaven know him next beſt, and how they eſteem him, you may ſee, Rev. v. 8, 10, 11, 12. The more that any on earth knows him, the more do they eſteem him; and only theſe that do not know him, do not eſteem him, 1 Cor. i. 21,—24. They that are beſt judges, think highly of Chriſt. What judge ye, what eſteem have ye of him? There is a fourfold lodging or room that the eſteem of Chriſt hath in the ſouls of them that duly eſteem him.

(1.) In their *intellective* faculty; that is, in their underſtanding this eſteem lodges, ſaying, O! *I determine to know nothing but Chriſt!* O Sirs, if a man had the knowledge of all the univerſities of the world concentred in him, and yet know not Chriſt, he is but a poor ſilly ſot. Paul, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, had a great deal of knowledge, and human literature; but whenever he came to know Chriſt, O, ſays he, *I count all but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.*

(2.) In their *elective* faculty; that is, in their choice does this eſteem lodge. O they that eſteem Chriſt, they ſelect and ſingle him out for a Head and Huſband, with whom they reſolve to live and die, ſaying, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I deſire beſides thee.*

(3.) In their *profecutive* faculty; that is, in their affections does this eſteem lodge; theſe do ardently and vehemently purſue after him. As nothing can ſatisfy a hungry man but food, ſo nothing ſatisfies ſuch a ſoul but Chriſt; hence proceeds their induſtry in the uſe of means and ordinances.

(4.) In their *retentive* faculty; that is, in their memory will this eſteem alſo lodge; while their eſteem of him makes them remember him, and their meditation of him to be ſweet: *When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, my ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips,* Pſalm lxiii. 5, 6. What we love and eſteem, will have a lodging in our minds and thoughts. And where does the ſtrain of our thoughts and meditations run? is, no doubt, implied in this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* What room do you give him in your heart and thoughts? Now, theſe four particulars, namely, 1. What *know* ye; 2. What *believe* ye; 3. What *love* ye; 4. What *eſteem* ye of Chriſt? are here implied.

3*dly*, The *third* think here propoſed was, to ſhew the import of this queſtion *formally* conſidered, with reſpect to the *quality* of the act. I have ſhewed what may be implied in this queſtion, with relation to the object, and alſo the act of thinking: now, the interrogative particle WHAT, pointing at the *quality* of this act, may furniſh us with ſome further thoughts concerning the import of the queſtion *formally* conſidered. It is the *what* in the text that now I am ſpecially upon; and beſides the general, *What* is your opinion of Chriſt? *What* is your judgment about Chriſt? There is a fourfold WHAT here implied.

1. What *good* do you think of him? you Phariſees think much good of yourſelves: who but you, and your righteouſneſs, your alms, your ſacrifices, your temple, your zeal for Moſes, and the law? but, *what think ye of Chriſt?* Is he no more in your view than a mortal ſon of a mortal man? no wonder then, in this caſe, you think little good of him. Can you aſcend no higher

higher in your contemplation to apprehend him as the immortal Son of the immortal God; the eternal Son of the eternal Father: the righteouſneſs of God, the gift of God, the true ſacrifice, the true temple, the antitype of all the types, the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, the fulneſs of all the prophecies and promiſes? What! do you think him good for nothing, but to be deſpiſed, debaſed, and trampled upon! What good do you think of him?

2. What *glory* do you think to be in him? Do you not darken his glory, when you look upon him only to be the *ſon of David*, and not alſo to be the *Lord of David*, and the *Lord of glory*, the *root and offspring of David;* not only the *offspring of David*, as man; but the *root* of David, as God? What think ye of him as the glory of God, and the God of glory, bringing in a diſpenſation much more glorious than that of Moſes, *which glory was to be done away?* 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, 9. Chriſt, as the *Sent of God*, being anointed with the Spirit for that end. *If the miniſtration of death, written and engraven on ſtones, was glorious,—how ſhall not the miniſtration of the Spirit be rather glorious? If the miniſtration of condemnation be glorious, much more does the miniſtration of righteouſneſs exceed in glory.* And, what glory do you think to be in Chriſt, who is the glory of all this glory? Do you ſee Chriſt to be thus glorious, and me to be the Chriſt? Though now, might he ſay, this glory is under a vail of fleſh, a vail of exinanition and humiliation; yet this mean appearance that I am making now, as if I were no more but a frail mortal man, was clearly foretold to you by the prophets concerning Chriſt, even that he ſhould be a *man*, and a *man of ſorrows:* can you ſee nothing of my glory and excellency under this vail? Is there no glory in the ſun, becauſe there is a cloud betwixt you and it?

3. What *uſe* do you think he is of? for, if he were only the ſon of David, he could be of no great uſefulneſs to a periſhing world of ſinners: but, do you think and conſider, that herein is the myſtery of divine grace? *God ſo loved the world, that he ſent his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him might not periſh, but have everlaſting*

everlaſting life. If the brazen ſerpent, which was but a type of Chriſt, was of uſe to the ſtung Iſraelites, what think you of Chriſt? can any thing in the world be ſo uſeful to ſinners as Chriſt? Of what uſe is the law, whereof you are boaſting? it is but a *dead letter*, a killing word, a ſentence of condemnation, a death ſummons, a dead warrant againſt them, without Chriſt, who is the *end of the law for righteouſneſs.* Who, but Chriſt, can reconcile God to man, and ingratiate man with God? Who but he, can fulfil the law, and ſatisfy juſtice for them, pay their debts, heal their diſeaſes, juſtify, ſanctify, and ſave them, vanquiſh ſin, death, and hell for them, and at laſt raiſe the mouldered carcaſe from corruption to incorruption, and inveſt it with a ſtate of everlaſting glory in the higheſt heaven, with *fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore at his right-hand?* Is he an uſeleſs Chriſt to you, though he fills *all in all*, and alone can give abundant ſatisfaction to the immortal ſoul, whereas all things elſe are but dry and empty without him, and leave men deſtitute? Oh! dry means, dry miniſters, dry ordinances, dry ſacraments, dry ſermons, and dry prayers, if Chriſt be away! Oh! dry breaſts, if he be not the milk; dry branches, if he be not the ſap; dry clouds, dry wells, if he be not the water! O what uſe think ye he is for? what work and ſervice have ye for him?

4. What *worth* do you think he is of? Your thoughts are employed, might Chriſt ſay, how to tempt me with queſtions about the law, undervaluing that Lord God that gave the law, and that now is come in the perſon of the Meſſias to fulfil the law; and is he unworthy to have a room in your thoughts? or what worth do you think him of? If you judge rightly and think duly of him, you will find he hath more real worth than all the world beſide: for, put all the creatures in heaven and earth in one ſcale, and Chriſt in another, you will find them all to be lighter than vanity. This is plain, if you conſider, that when all the world of men, and angels, and creatures were weighed in the balance with divine juſtice, they were found too light to counterpoiſe it, or give ſatisfaction to it; all they together could not make up the full

full ſum or value that ſhould ſatisfy that juſtice: it coſt more to redeem a ſoul, than all that they were worth; *The redemption of the ſoul is precious, and ceaſes for ever*, ſays the Pſalmiſt. But Chriſt, having *unſearchable riches*, is a maſs of treaſure big enough for the purpoſe; and therefore, when he was laid in the balance with infinite juſtice, he was found of ſufficient weight to poiſe it, without any creature's help to hold down the ſcale: nay, *He looked, and there was none to help, none to uphold; therefore his own arm brought ſalvation. And he trode the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there were none with him*, Iſa. lxiii. 3, 5. Who, among the creatures, could go thorow conquering and to conquer, as Chriſt did, when he had heaven, earth, and hell to grapple with? What think ye of Chriſt then? what worth do you think he is of?

Upon the whole, before I leave this point, let me aſk theſe two queſtions, to bring home this one, concerning what worth do you think Chriſt is of.

The firſt queſtion is, *What* PRICE *would you buy him at, if you were to buy him?* Surely, if you had a due thought of Chriſt, and a diſcovery of the Pearl, you would, for joy, ſell your *all* to buy it, Matth. xiii. 44, 45, 46. And when all is done, you would ſee, your *all* to be nothing at all, and the Pearl to be *all in all*. Indeed this treaſure is ſo great, this Pearl is ſo precious, that it cannot be bought at any price; and therefore the price of it is, *no money, no price;* altogether free, Iſa. lv. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.* To *buy* here, is to beg, and take freely; yet, if the queſtion be, *What would you give for him, if he were to be bought?* Surely, if you knew your own need, and his infinite fulneſs and ſuitableneſs for you, the queſtion will ſuggeſt ſome great thought of Chriſt. O a thouſand worlds, if I had them, would I give for him! Yea, but there are ſome that hold him at a very low price, they would not give a groat or ſixpence for Chriſt or his intereſt; they would not part with a ſhilling, or a crown, for Chriſt or his cauſe, Chriſt or his goſpel;

nay, they will not part with a beaſtly luſt for him, their idols and the world are of greater price to them. But there are others that know his worth better, and are willing to forſake all for him; *We have forſaken all, and followed thee*, Matth. xix. 27. The holy martyrs thought not their lives and their hearts-blood too dear for Chriſt; Rev. xii. 11. *They loved not their lives unto the death*; that is, they deſpiſed their lives in compariſon of Chriſt; they expoſed their bodies to horrible and painful deaths, their temporal eſtates to the ſpoil, *taking joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, and expoſing their perſons to all manner of ſhame and contempt for the cauſe of Chriſt. O but a ſoul that by faith apprehends the worth of Chriſt, will chearfully and willingly give all for him; and having got Chriſt, will go away rejoicing, and think his bargain to be very good, very great!

The ſecond queſtion is, *What* RATE *would ye* SELL *him at, if ye were to ſell him?* Judas ſold him, and the high prieſts bought him for thirty pieces of ſilver, *A goodly price that I was prized at of them*, Zech. xi. 13. It is ironically ſpoken, *A boney price for a God-man; Caſt it to the potter*, ſays the Lord. Men of darkened underſtandings, corrupt minds, and depraved affections, will ſell Chriſt and his cauſe, Chriſt and a good conſcience, for a trifle: yea, many betray his cauſe for ſome poor worldly conſideration. O for ſuch a ſpirit as I read of in the forty martyrs, that ſuffered under Lucinius, *anno* 300, that when Agricolaus his deputy, one of the devil's agents, ſet upon them ſeveral ways to draw them to deny Chriſt, and at laſt tempted them with an offer of money and preferment, they all cried out with one conſent, Ὦ Αἰδιότης, ὦ Αἰδιότης, χρήματα δίδες τὰ απομένοντα: "O Eternity, Eternity! give us money that "will laſt to eternity, and gold that will abide for ever, "ſuch as Chriſt can give us." They ſlighted that pitiful wealth which was current only in this beggarly world, when coming in competition with Chriſt and his durable riches; they would not ſell Chriſt for a world, nay, not for a world of worlds. Oh! at what rate would you ſell Chriſt! Surely, if you think duly and highly of him, you will buy him at any rate, but ſell

him

him at no rate. It is eaſy indeed to frame a paſſing thought, Oh! who would put Chriſt in the balance with any thing! But ſtay till a day of trial come, and the queſtion be brought cloſe home, *Now, will you quit Chriſt and his cauſe, or will you quit with father and mother, and wife and children, and eſtate and fortune, houſes and yards, and life and all?* I imagine that would be a hard queſtion; *Skin for ſkin, all that a man hath will he give for his life;* he will quit all before he quit with his life. Surely, if Chriſt be your life, you would quit all other lives for him; a natural life, a temporal life, a life of pleaſure, a life of honour, a life of eaſe and worldly accommodations; and if you think much of him, there is ſome life you have quit for him already, at leaſt in part, and in deſire and endeavour, namely, a life of ſin, a life of ſelf, a life of legal righteouſneſs, that *the life you live may be a life of faith on the Son of God.* Now, I ſuppoſe, all theſe *whats* are imported in the queſtion, 1. What *good* do you think of him? 2. What *glory* do you think to be in him? 3. What *uſe* do you think he is for? 4. What *worth* do you think he is of, when he is to be bought or ſold? This queſtion bears all theſe in its boſom, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

4*thly*, The *fourth* and *laſt* thing propoſed upon the explication of the import of the queſtion, was, to ſhew the import of it *ſubjectively* conſidered; or with reſpect to the perſons that are the ſubjects thereof; or to whom the queſtion is put, in the pronoun YE, *What think* YE *of Chriſt?* And under this conſideration we may take a fourfold view of the queſtion.

1. View it as it was put to the *Jews* in general, for ſo were theſe to whom Chriſt is here ſpeaking: ye that are Jews, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Ye that are the people of whom concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, for (as ye own concerning Chriſt) he is the ſon of David; and ye are the people to whom he and his goſpel behoved firſt to come; for, *ſalvation is of the Jews*, John iv. 22. Ye are his own people; and, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Alas! *He came to his own, and his own received him not;* they thought nothing of him when he came: and therefore, as Paul ſays, Acts xxviii. 28. *The ſalvation of God is ſent*

to the Gentiles; and he adds, *they will hear it.* Now, of conſequence, Chriſt and the goſpel, and this queſtion with it, comes to you, Gentiles, ſaying, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Oh! will ye think nothing of him? or, will ye make Paul a liar, who ſaid, ye ſhould hear it? or rather, will ye give the lie to the Spirit of God? Nay, whatever the moſt part do, yet *as many as were ordained to eternal life* will be brought to think highly of Chriſt, by getting the ſaving knowledge, faith, love, and eſteem of him.

2. View the queſtion as it was put to the *Phariſees*, a ſet of hypocrites and ſelf-righteous perſons: ye that are Phariſees, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Ye are ſtrict obſervers of the letter of the law, and think much of your long prayers, your giving alms of all that you poſſeſs, your faſting twice a-week, your being no open drunkards, whoremongers, extortioners, nor like this or that publican; but while you think ſo much of yourſelves and your own righteouſneſs, and think nothing of Chriſt, *publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before you;* therefore, what think ye of Chriſt the ſon of David, the Lord of David, the Lord of the law, by whom alone *everlaſting righteouſneſs is brought in,* anſwering the ſpirit, and not the letter of the law only? The queſtion then comes to be propoſed to all of the ſame kidney with theſe Phariſees: Ye that are *hypocrites*, and *ſelf-juſtifying* perſons, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Ye that are thinking, O you are an honeſt man, you have always been a good neighbour, juſt in your dealing, civil in your carriage, and ſo you fancy yourſelf to be *touching the law blameleſs;* what, man! are you content to be judged by the law? then to Cæſar let us go; to the law let us go: but only look the law broad in the face; look not only to the out-ſide of the law, like a man looking only to the back and out-ſide of a looking-glaſs, or to the frame and edge of it, where he does not ſee himſelf; but look to the in-ſide of the looking-glaſs of the law, to the ſpirituality of it; ſet your face to the face of the glaſs, and you will ſee what a deformed filthy creature you are, ſo you will find it curſing you to your face, and curſing you to hell for every wicked thought, as well as action,

ſaying,

saying, *Curſed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* Therefore, you have need to think again, and think better than ever you did, about a law-juſtifying righteouſneſs; and to think there is need of this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

3. View the queſtion as it was put to the *Sadducees*; for it ſeems they were combined with the Phariſees here againſt Chriſt, if you compare ver. 23. and 34. Now, theſe Sadducees were a ſett of people that denied the immortality of the ſoul, the reſurrection of the body, the exiſtence of ſpirits and angels, Acts xxiii. 8.: In a word, they were half atheiſts, if not wholly ſo; like the graceleſs wits of our day, that call themſelves *Free-thinkers:* Well, ſays Chriſt, *What think ye of Chriſt? whoſe ſon is he?* If you could view him as not only David's ſon, but David's Lord and God; and as the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, *not the God of the dead, but of the living;* would you perſiſt in theſe atheiſtical tenets, concerning the reſurrection of the body, the being of ſouls? No, no. The queſtion then is applicable to all that ſort of people: ye that are Atheiſts, Deiſts, and damnable erroneous Free-thinkers, Oh! *what think ye of Chriſt?* No doubt, with Herod and his men of war, you ſet him at nought! But, Oh! will you think again, and recal your thoughts? let them fix upon Chriſt a while, and you ſhall find all the truths of the Bible cleared and vindicated, by him who is the truth itſelf; and that this eternal Son of God is ſent from the Father, of purpoſe to confirm them by his doctrine, life, death, and reſurrection. Again,

4. View the queſtion, with reſpect to its general deſign, which is (together with all other ſcriptures) the *profit* of all to whom it comes; for their *reproof, correction,* or *inſtruction in righteouſneſs,* 2 Tim. iii. 16.; and for convincing of ſinners, or confirming of ſaints: and ſo it comes to all and every one of us, miniſters or people, high and low, rich and poor; *What think ye of Chriſt?* And here I have occaſion to look round about me, and aſk the queſtion at all and every one that hears me; and indeed we may begin firſt at ourſelves.

O we that are MINISTERS, *What think we of Chriſt?* Is he the Son and Lord of David, the eternal Son of God? Surely we cannot think, or ſpeak, or preach too much of Chriſt. It is our honour, if we can ſay, *We preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord;* and that to us, *who are the leaſt of all ſaints* (may ſome of us ſay) *ſhould this grace be given, to preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt.* But, while we ſpeak of Chriſt to others, what do we think of Chriſt ourſelves? To be ſure, if we do not think of Chriſt as we ought, we will not ſpeak of Chriſt as we ſhould. Chriſt in the heart, and Chriſt in the mouth, make right preaching. If any *preach Chriſt out of envy*, as the apoſtle ſays, *it is well that Chriſt is preached:* but as it muſt be but bungling work to ſuch; ſo they would do well to conſider, that the queſtion is not, *What* PREACH *ye of Chriſt?* but, *What think ye of Chriſt?*—Again, O ye that are the PEOPLE, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Whatever be your ſtate or condition, ſex or quality, the queſtion comes to you; and let none of you dare to neglect the pondering on it, when Chriſt himſelf is poſing you with it, *What think ye of Chriſt?*—Ye that are MAGISTRATES, or in places of power, truſt, and authority, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Are you employing your power for Chriſt, and his cauſe and intereſt?—Ye that are MASTERS, or MISTRESSES of families, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Is it the language of your ſoul, *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord?* Are you deſiring, with Abraham, to command your children, and your houſhold after you, to *keep the ways of the Lord*, and praying for them, and inſtructing them in the knowledge of Chriſt?—Again, Ye that are CHILDREN under your parents, O! *What think ye of Chriſt? whoſe ſon is he?* Do you know him to be the ſon of David, and the Son of God too? And would it not be your great happineſs, to be the ſons and children of God in him? Your father and mother may die, and leave you, therefore it is your beſt to ſeek an intereſt in him to be your everlaſting Father.—Ye that are SERVANTS, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Would you have him for your Maſter and Lord? Is it not your greateſt honour to be his ſervants,

who

who is David's Lord? He that was David's ſon, was David's Maſter: and as David in Spirit called him LORD; ſo, ſhould not all that is within you call him Lord? Serve your maſters honeſtly; but let him who is the *Lord of lords* be a maſter above all maſters to you. —Ye that are TRADESMEN, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Have you no trading with heaven? Does your civil trade in a world take up all your thoughts? Surely, it is either an unlawful trade, or unlawfully uſed, that cannot conſiſt with this Chriſtian trade of giving the chief of your thoughts to him, that is the *Chief among ten thouſand*, Song v. 10.—Ye that are HUSBANDMEN, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Do you think more of your ploughs and oxen, or corn and cattle, and barns and goods, than of glorious Chriſt? Do you not know, whether you be tenants, feuars, or freeholders, that you are tenants to him, and hold your all of him? Are you more taken up in thinking of a great crop, or a good harveſt, than of him who is the *Lord of the harveſt*, both in a natural and ſpiritual ſenſe, and Lord of all that you have?—Ye that are mean COTTERS, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Wo's me, does your cote-houſe, and your cow, and your ſmall yard, ly nearer your heart than precious Chriſt? Oh! if you were acquainted with communion with him, you would find a mean cottage with Chriſt better than a princely palace without him.—Ye that are poor BEGGARS, *What think ye of Chriſt?* To the *poor the goſpel is preached;* to you is Chriſt and his unſearchable riches offered: but I fear there are ſome of you who think more of a half-penny, than you think of Chriſt: everlaſting poverty and miſery will be your portion, if your thoughts be not changed and renewed. You come to communion-occaſions only to beg alms, not knowing that then you are at the *beautiful* gate of the temple, where you might get an alms that might enrich you for ever. You have the art of begging from men, and from door to door, but perhaps you never think of begging at Chriſt's door: Oh! will you begin to think, and to think of Chriſt, before the door of mercy be ſhut!—Again, ye that are RICH and WEALTHY in the world, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

Hath

Hath he given you riches, think you, to ſteal away your hearts from him, or rather to improve them for, and conſecrate them to his honour, and for the good of others, eſpecially of the houſhold of faith? Men may court your favour, but you are to be pitied, as poor miſerable wretches, if you have your portion only in this life: though you had all the gold of Ophir, without Chriſt you have nothing but a ſhadow; you are deſtitute of the true ſubſtance.—You that are WISE, MIGHTY, or NOBLE, *What think ye of Chriſt?* May it not ſtartle you a little, that he hath ſaid, *Not many wiſe after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath choſen the fooliſh, weak, baſe, and deſpicable things of the world:* you have no reaſon to deſpair, for he hath not ſaid *not any* of them; but yet you have reaſon to think where you are, for he hath ſaid *not many* of them: and indeed, as an evidence of this, look to the great men of our day, you will ſee, that the generality of the nobility and gentry of Scotland and England, they think very little of Chriſt.—You that are SCHOLARS and STUDENTS, *What think ye of Chriſt?* What will all the wiſdom and literature, liberal arts and ſciences, and beſt accompliſhments in the world avail you, without Chriſt? They will qualify you to be more eminent ſervants to the devil, and his intereſt, if you learn not Chriſt together with them. You may be ſtudents of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew: ſtudents of philoſophy, aſtronomy, aſtrology, geography, and mathematics; yea, and ſtudents of divinity too; and yet loſe all your pains, if you do not ſtudy Chriſt.—Ye that are IGNORANT and ILLITERATE perſons, *What think ye of Chriſt?* It may be you cannot read the Bible; you was never at a ſchool; your parents died when you were young, or elſe were poor, and could not, or graceleſs and would not ſet you to the ſchool; or if you can read, that is all: you know not ſo much as the firſt principles of the doctrine of Chriſt, and can hardly tell whoſe ſon he is. If you could be brought this day to think highly of Chriſt, then *ſhould you know*, and *follow on to know the Lord.* Oh! neglect not henceforth the means of the knowledge of Chriſt! if you learn of him, he will make

you

you wiſer than the reſt of the world, for as far behind as you are; even wiſe unto ſalvation.—Ye that are OLD men and woman, *What think ye of Chriſt?* How many thouſands and millions of thoughts have you beſtowed upon the devil, the world, your luſts, and idols in your time, which would have been better beſtowed upon Chriſt, and the concerns of your eternal ſalvation? And now, that death, judgment, and eternity, are hard at hand; Ah! how can you think of going down to the grave, and in to an everlaſting ſtate, without being in caſe to anſwer this queſtion to purpoſe, *What think ye of Chriſt?*—Ye that are YOUNG men and women, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Ye are now in the flower of your age; Oh! ſhall not Chriſt have the flower of your thoughts, that according to the Father's promiſe to him, he may have the *dew of his youth*, by your dedicating to him the dew of your youth, and fleeing all youthful luſts?—Ye that are CHILDREN and little-ones, lads and laſſes, boys and girls, capable to think, O! *What think ye of Chriſt?* Alas! my dear children, (to ſay a word to you) you may ſee what ill hearts you have, that make you think more of little plays and trifles, nignays and butterflies, than you think of Chriſt: you mind any thing ſooner than your *Creator* or *Redeemer*, whom God calls you to *remember in the days of your youth.* Therefore, after this, when you are playing, will you think more of praying? for God ſays, *I love them that love me, and them that ſeek me early ſhall find me:* and think more of reading the Bible, like young Timothy, who *from a child knew the holy ſcriptures.*

In a word, if there be any perſons here who think I have not touched at their caſe, let them know, that the queſtion is to all and every one of you, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Oh graceleſs world! How unworthily do you think of Chriſt? The covetous man thinks more of a ſmall piece of money than of Chriſt, like Demas. Ambitious men think more of a hat than of Chriſt; like Haman, or as Saul, who ſaid to Samuel, *Honour me before the people.* The voluptuous man thinks more of a baſe luſt, than of Chriſt. The drunkard thinks more of a hearty cup, than of Chriſt. The glutton thinks

more of a hearty meal, than of Chriſt. The proud man thinks more of himſelf, than of Chriſt. Pride of righteouſneſs thinks more of prayers, and attendance on ordinances, than of Chriſt. Pride of grace thinks more of a good frame, than of Chriſt. Pride of wiſdom thinks more of a witticiſm, or of a fine diſcourſe, than of Chriſt. Pride of beauty thinks more of a ſkin-deep complexion, than of Chriſt. Pride of bravery thinks more of a fine ſuit of clothes, than of Chriſt, though the ſily ſheep wore it on its back before them. Behold how Chriſt is vilified and undervalued in the world!

But, O BELIEVER! *What think ye of Chriſt?* Surely, if you be a gracious perſon, Chriſt will be to you a precious perſon; and you will wonder at the folly and madneſs of the world, that ſets every thing above Chriſt, in their thoughts and eſteem. Why, they are ignorant of Chriſt, and ignorant of themſelves: if they were convinced of their ſin and miſery, they would think much of a Saviour and Redeemer; if they knew their diſeaſe, they would think much of ſuch a phyſician to heal them; if they knew their nakedneſs, they would think much of ſuch a garment to clothe them; if they knew their pollution, they would think much of ſuch a fountain to waſh them; if they knew their deep arrears to divine juſtice, and bankrupt ſtate, they would think much of ſuch a Surety to pay their debt. Surely, if they knew, they would not thus deſpiſe the Lord of glory. However, be it known to all and every one of you, that this queſtion is put to you; and you ought to put it to yourſelves, before God, by diſcovering what you are, and where you ſtand.—And now, having opened the import of the queſtion, in the ſeveral branches of it, I proceed next to,

III. The *third* general head propoſed, namely, to offer ſome *reaſons* of the doctrine, why this is the great leading queſtion to the Chriſtian catechiſm, by which people are to try themſelves; or why this queſtion is put as a touchſtone, for diſcovering what metal we are of, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Why,

1. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe

becauſe without *right thoughts of Chriſt*, there is no *right thoughts of God;* and without the knowledge of Chriſt, there is no true knowledge of God. God is an inviſible God, and Chriſt only *is the image of the inviſible God*, Col. i. 15. There are three ways to know, ſee, and comprehend God: one is, by the creatures he hath made; *The inviſible things of God are clearly ſeen from the creation of the world, even his eternal power and Godhead*, Rom. i. 20. Another is by the ſcriptures, for they make God known: but the third and only ſaving way of knowing and apprehending God, is by Chriſt. Now, the knowledge of God, that we have by the creatures, is like the knowledge we have of a man by his workmanſhip, which he hath wrought: if the workmanſhip be rare and excellent, ſuch as hath required great art and ſtrength, then we conceive the man that hath done it, hath been a wiſe man, a ſtrong man, and the like, according to the nature of the workmanſhip: ſo, when we know God by the creatures, we conceive that the God that hath made them, muſt be a great God, a wiſe God, a powerful God. But next, the knowledge that we have of God by the ſcriptures; I mean, the literal knowledge, is like that knowledge that one gets of a famous learned man, by reading what he writes; if in his writing he hath diſcovered much learning, vaſt ſenſe, and ſolid judgment, accordingly we conceive him to be a ſenſible judicious man: ſo, by reading the word, we conceive of God's excellency, as we do of a man by his writing; but the knowledge of God, that we get by Chriſt, is like that knowledge which one gets of a king, by having ſeen his image, or rather his ſon, who is as like him as he can look. Now, Chriſt is like the Father, and ſo truly and really his image, that though blind Arians cannot ſee the eſſential glory of the Father in him, yet he ſays to Philip, John xiv. 6. *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* Now, in the book of the creature, we may ſee the being of God; in the book of the ſcripture, the will of God: but above all theſe, we have another book written, as it were, with the rays of the ſun, even, CHRIST, whom we may call a book, for he is ſtill ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ,

the Word of God, Rev. xix. 13.; but he is not made with ink and paper, he is a living book, a living picture and repreſentative of the Father; the *brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. The ſaving knowledge of God is by Chriſt, John i. 18. and in Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 6. And again, hence,

2. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe, without right thoughts of Chriſt, there can be *no religion*, and conſequently *no ſalvation*. There is no coming to God, but in Chriſt; *I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father, but by me*, John xiv. 6. Without believing thoughts of Chriſt, then, we cannot worſhip God aright, or acceptably; for, *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, Heb. xi. 6. And I have ſhewed you already, that right thinking is believing; and without believing in him, there is not ſalvation: *He that believes not ſhall be damned;* for, *there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we muſt be ſaved; neither is there ſalvation in any other*, Acts iv. 12. A man, that cannot think of Chriſt as he ſhould, cannot perform a religious action as he ought: as the *evil man, out of the evil treaſure of his heart, brings forth evil things;* ſo a *good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart, brings forth good things*, Matth. xii. 35. Now, Chriſt in the heart, by his Spirit, is indeed a good treaſure: and as natural thoughts produce natural actions, carnal thoughts carnal actions; ſo ſpiritual thoughts bring forth ſpiritual actions, and Chriſtian thoughts Chriſtian actions. True religion begins and advances with the right thoughts of God. I defy a man that knows the Lord, to pray or worſhip God comfortably, without ſome due apprehenſion of Chriſt: for, as in Chriſt alone God is well-pleaſed; ſo it is in the view of Chriſt, or of God in him, that the ſoul is well-pleaſed.

3. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe it is the *beſt rule of ſelf-examination*, ſeeing, as mens thoughts of Chriſt are, ſo is their ſtate; as *men think in their heart, ſo are they* Prov. xxii. 9. If a man be *riſen with Chriſt*, then his thoughts and *affections are ſet on things above, where Chriſt ſits on the right-hand of God*, Col. iii. 1, 2. If you be Chriſtians indeed, then you

you have *Chriſt in you, the hope of glory*, Col. i. 27.; and if Chriſt be in you, he will have a high room in your thought and eſteem: and therefore it is laid down as the beſt rule of examination, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Examine yourſelves, whether you be in the faith; prove yourſelves; know ye not your own ſelves, how that Chriſt Jeſus is in you, except you be reprobates*, ἀδόκιμοί, UNAPPROVED, or REJECTED? *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. *Now, they that have the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit, the things of God*, and particularly the CHRIST of God.

4. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe this queſtion comprehends *all other queſtions in religion.* After the Phariſees had done with aſking their difficult queſtions about the law, Chriſt propoſes a queſtion, which ſwallows up all their queſtions, and comprehends all that is neceſſary to be known; and if we could anſwer this queſtion to purpoſe, we would be in caſe to anſwer all the queſtions that concerns both the law and the goſpel; for, *Chriſt is the end of the law*, and *the ſum of the goſpel.* They that know Chriſt, they know where to find all the righteouſneſs that the law requires, and all the grace that the goſpel promiſes: and ſo this queſtion is the compend of the *Chriſtian catechiſm*, and that not only with reſpect to knowledge, but alſo with reſpect to practice and experience. Chriſt is the ſum of practical godlineſs; for, *without him you can do nothing*; and by him ſtrengthening you, you can do all things. And Chriſt is the ſum of experimental religion alſo: that experience is not worth much, that hath not Chriſt for the ſum total of it; for, it is *out of his fulneſs we receive grace for grace:* and when a man can ſay, *Beholding his glory, I have been changed into the ſame image*, it is a rich experience. In a word, all queſtions that relate to Chriſtian experience may be reduced to this one, *What think ye of Chriſt?* If the queſtion be, what know ye of conviction? what know ye of converſion? what know ye of illumination? what know ye of regeneration? what know ye of juſtification? what know ye of ſanctification? what intereſt have ye in Chriſt? what part and portion have ye in the Son of Jeſſe? what ſhare

have

have ye of his grace? and what hope of his glory? All ſuch queſtions may be anſwered with the anſwer of this, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

5. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe he would, by this, put a ſtop, and give a check to *all unneceſſary curious queſtions.* They were but curious queſtions at beſt, that the Sadducees and Phariſees had aſked of Chriſt; but here Chriſt gives a check to them, by a queſtion of everlaſting moment. Some, that are but ſenſeleſs profeſſors, ſhew a deal of curioſity in ſome of their queſtions, ſuch as, *Who was Melchizedeck's father?* and the like: but, O here is a more neceſſary queſtion, *Who was Chriſt's Father! What think ye of Chriſt? and whoſe Son is he?* Here is an ocean of wiſdom, that you may profitably dive into, and yet never get to the bottom of it; for, who can anſwer that queſtion about Chriſt's Father, *What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canſt tell?* Prov. xxx. 4.

6. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe our thoughts are but *loſt*, if they be not beſtowed upon him. Till we be brought to think of Chriſt duly, all our thoughts are but loſt thoughts, and vain thoughts; *O Jeruſalem, waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, how long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* The Lord ſees the thoughts of men to be but vanity: our thoughts are like birds flying from mountain to mountain, and ſkipping from place to place; and like the children running after butterflies, or ſuch like trifles, their pains are loſt, and ſo are our thoughts loſt, while they are not terminate upon Chriſt.

7. This queſtion is put, *What think ye of Chriſt?* becauſe there are ſo many *miſtaken thoughts of Chriſt* in the world: *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men:* the world is filled with prejudice againſt him, ſaying, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* Therefore we ought to come and ſee, and conſider what he is, and whoſe ſon he is, that we may not run into the ſame common miſtake with the reſt of the world, and that we may not take him for a *root out of a dry ground, having no form or comelineſs*, Iſa. liii. 2.

8. This queſtion is put to us, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

becauſe

becauſe we have *miſtaken thoughts of other things*, while we have not *right thoughts of Chriſt*. The Phariſees had miſtaken thoughts of God and his law, becauſe they had not right thoughts of Chriſt; therefore Chriſt propoſes the queſtion. And indeed, Sirs, we miſtake God, we miſtake the law, we miſtake the goſpel, we miſtake ourſelves, we miſtake our duty, we miſtake every thing, as long as we have wrong notions of Chriſt. A man may miſtake ſo far, as to think that he is about his duty to God, and yet may be fighting againſt God, while Chriſt is not known or thought upon; Acts xxvi. 9. *I verily thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth*, ſays Paul; and accordingly he was perſecuting Chriſt in his members: yet he thought he was doing God ſervice, till Chriſt diſcovered himſelf, and cried to him, ſaying, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* Then he began to think of Chriſt, ſaying, *Who art thou, Lord?* Why, *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* Whenever he began to think duly of Chriſt, then he ſaw he had been in a miſtake. People may think, verily they ought to do this and that againſt ſome of God's children; but, if they had other thoughts of Chriſt, they would have other thoughts of their duty, and would ſee that verily they ought not to do ſo.—Again, Paul thought his own righteouſneſs *gain*, before he knew Chriſt; but then he thought it *loſs: What things were gain to me, theſe I counted loſs for Chriſt.*

9. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe thus you may come to underſtand what are *his thoughts of you.* It is true, *His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways; for, as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are his thoughts higher than our thoughts:* and hence he may have thoughts of mercy towards a poor ſoul, that thinks there is nothing but wrath in his heart againſt it. But this I ſay, that as to your knowing and underſtanding of his thoughts towards you; as, on the one hand, a man, in a natural ſtate, cannot have high, believing, and becoming thoughts of Chriſt, and ſo cannot conclude that Chriſt hath any favourable thoughts of him, while he remains thus in unbelief and deſpiſing of Chriſt; nay, he may know

know and underſtand, if he remain in that ſtate, thoughtleſs of Chriſt, and diſregarding him, that *Chriſt will come in flaming fire, and take vengeance on him*, 2 Theſ. i. 7, 8.: So, on the other hand, the man that hath got ſuch diſcoveries of Chriſt, as to create high, ſpiritual, and elevated thoughts of Chriſt, he may, from thence underſtand, that Chriſt thinks well of him, and that his thoughts towards him are *thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give him an expected end.* It is true, Chriſt's thoughts of the believer, are not of a fleeting nature, up and down, high and low, as the believer's thoughts of him are; nay, Chriſt's thoughts are unchangeably the ſame: but, when the believer's thoughts of Chriſt are raiſed, then he is in the beſt caſe to know and underſtand Chriſt's loving thoughts towards him. Why, even as a fountain may be known by the ſtreams, ſo it is here; our knowledge, faith, love, and eſteem of Chriſt, are but ſtreams that flow from Chriſt's kind heart towards us; *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us;* we think of him, becauſe he firſt thinks of us. And, therefore, by what we think of Chriſt, we may know what he thinks of us: if you think honourably of him, you may thence know he thinks favourably of you; if you think much of him, you may know he thinks much of you. O! may a believer ſay, I have reaſon to think much good of him; for, he is *fairer than the ſons of men*, the ſpotleſs Lamb of God: but he hath reaſon to think much ill of me; for, I am all black and deformed, like hell and the devil. But, I will tell you, believer, that all his thoughts of you make you to be in him, what he thinks you to be in him, however deformed you are in yourſelves, and ſee yourſelves to be; yet, I ſay, as his thoughts make things to be, (for he but thought there ſhould be a world, and there was a world; whenever it was his mind that it ſhould be, then it was; and whatever he thought it to be, that it was, according to his thought;) and as his thoughts of you make you to be in him, what you are in him: ſo, if you think him *fair*, and *altogether lovely*, he is not behind with you, for he thinks you *fair* too; hence he ſays to the ſpouſe, who was admiring his beauty, *Thou art*

art all fair, my love, there is no ſpot in thee, Song iv. 7. And he doth not ſay any thing, but what he thinks, his words expreſs his thoughts; for, *he cannot lye, who is the ſtrength of Iſrael.* Now, believer, if you cannot think, or believe, that you are altogether fair in him, becauſe you ſee yourſelf altogether filthy in yourſelf; know, that if you ſaw yourſelf to be altogether fair in yourſelf, there would be no need of, or room for believing that you are all fair in him. Hence he hath left deformities about you, that there may be room for faith: therefore, let the feeling of your deformity make you humble; but let it not hinder your faith, which muſt not ſtand upon feeling, but muſt act contrary to it upon Chriſt's word: for, if you ground your faith upon what you feel in yourſelf, you will never believe what Chriſt ſays concerning your being *all fair*, and your being *made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. If your faith then can act ſo as to raiſe your thoughts of Chriſt as altogether lovely, fair, and ſpotleſs, you have ground to conclude, by the ſame act of faith, that he hath high thoughts of you, as being all fair and ſpotleſs in him, whatever deformity you feel in yourſelf. Chriſt is infinitely more to you, believer, than you believe him to be: but, whatever you believe him to be, you may be ſure he is that to you; for, faith's ſeeing, and having, is all one, even as believing is explained by receiving, and receiving by believing; *As many as received him, to them gave he power* [or PRIVILEGE] *to become the ſons of God, even to them who believe on his name*, John i. 12. What you believe then, you receive; and what you receive, you have; and what you have in him, you are in him: having beauty, and riches, and righteouſneſs in him; you are beautiful, rich, and righteous: and conſequently, when you believingly think he is all fair and glorious, you may know he thinks you are all fair and glorious in him: and he thinks no more of you than what you really are in him.—The queſtion then is put, becauſe you may know, by what you think of Chriſt, what Chriſt thinks of you.

10. This queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is put, becauſe we can never think *too much of him*, who is the

God-man, David's Son, and David's Lord; being God as well as man. O what a glorious object of our contemplation is here! You may think too much of yourselves, and your own righteousness; but you cannot think too much of Christ, and his righteousness: yea, when you think any thing of yourself, and your righteousness, you think too much of it; but when you think as much as you can of Christ, and his righteousness, you think too little of him.—You may think too much of creatures, but you cannot think too much of Christ. Yea, you may think to much of angels, as the apostle John did, when he *fell down to worship towards the feet of the angel*, Rev. xxii. 8. To think of the nature of angels, with that inward reverence and adoration which we are to have when we think of Christ, would be idolatry; and to think of Christ, with the same frame of heart as we do of angels, would be profaneness. Thus we may think too highly and reverently of angels; but we cannot think of Christ too highly, too reverently; nor can we think too much of him, who is *the Lord of angels*, and whom we are to *honour even as we honour the Father*.——These are the reasons of the question.

IV. The *fourth* general head proposed, was, To make *Application* of the whole. And it may be applied for the following uses. 1. For *Information*. 2. For *Conviction*. 3. For *Trial*. 4. For *Lamentation*. 5. For *Exhortation*. And, 6. For *Direction*.

First, It may be applied for *Information*, in these and the like lessons following.

1. Hence we may learn, seeing the great question in the Christian Catechism is, *What think ye of Christ?* then the sum of Christian knowledge lies in this one word, *viz.* CHRIST. It is not in Christ absolutely considered, by what he is in himself; but in God relatively considered, by what he is to us, namely, in Christ: therefore, I observe, the question is not, *What think ye of* GOD? but, *What think ye of* CHRIST? For, as God out of Christ stands in no relation to us sinners, but that of an *enemy*, and a *consuming fire*; so the nature, essence, and immensity of God, and what he is in himself, is not the

the great Chriſtian queſtion; but rather, what he is to us, and ſo what he is in Chriſt. All the ſaving manifeſtations of God to his people in ſcripture were ſtill, not of God, abſolutely and eſſentially, in what he was in himſelf, and in his nature; but relatively, in what he was to them: and ſo it was always in Chriſt. Thus, when he came to Abraham, he ſaid, *I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward*, Gen. xv. 1. *I am thy God, and the God of thy ſeed; which ſeed was Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 16. in whom that covenant and promiſe was eſtabliſhed to Abraham and his offspring. And when God manifeſted himſelf to the patriarchs that came of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, his ordinary way was to make himſelf known upon that ground of the new covenant eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, *Abraham's ſeed*: hence when he came to them, he uſed to ſay to them, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob*; that is, he manifeſted himſelf to them, not abſolutely, by what he was in his nature; but relatively, by what he was to them in Chriſt the promiſed ſeed.

If we begin to dive into that queſtion, *What think ye of God?* we may ſoon loſe ourſelves, and come to the philoſopher's demand of a day to anſwer that queſtion, and then a week, and then a month, and then tell it is impoſſible to anſwer it: nay, we ought not to be curious in ſearching into the nature of God, leſt we get a daſh; for, human philoſophy cannot reach it; yea, I doubt if angelical wiſdom can. It is the only pleaſant, ſaving, and profitable enquiry, to ſtudy this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Here we find what God is to us. To enquire what God is in himſelf, abſolutely and eſſentially, is no ſaving or profitable enquiry. What profit is it for a man, who lives under the north-pole, and ſees not the ſun for one half of the year, though he ſhould count the courſe of the ſun all that time that he ſees it not? Or, what profit were it for a man to go and count what rent the king of Morroco or emperor of China draws every year, and he gets none of it? As fooliſh is it for us to begin and ſtudy what God is abſolutely in himſelf, and not what he is relatively to us; therefore the queſtion is not, *What think ye of* GOD? but

What think ye of CHRIST? And this, by the bye, ſhews the difference that there is between learned fools and wiſe Chriſtians; why, the learned fools ſeek to know and comprehend what God is; what is this myſtery of the Trinity, and the like; and there he loſes himſelf: he ſeeks to know what God is himſelf, and not what he is to him. But the poor Chriſtian is herein wiſer than that learned clerk, for all his wit; for the Chriſtian ſtudies Chriſt, and ſo knows what God is to him, better than all the learned Rabbies with their curious ſpeculations: though yet the poor ſoul may otherwiſe be very ignorant and illiterate, yet it is *wiſe unto ſalvation*, becauſe he knows Chriſt, and *Chriſt is made of God to him wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption:* and when he knows Chriſt, he is upon the ſureſt and ſafeſt way to know God; for he ſees God in Chriſt, and God related to him in Chriſt; for Chriſt is our relation as God-man, Mediator. And indeed, Sirs, to believe in Chriſt, is to believe God's relation to us, and God reconciled to us: for, when we look to Chriſt, we ſee God in him; and when we ſee God in him, we ſee that he is reconciled in him to us, and well-pleaſed in him with us; 2 Cor. v. 19. *God is in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* Matth. iii. 17. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* I own, indeed, a man may be a believer, and yet apprehend God to be his enemy; but then he is not believing, he is not thinking of Chriſt by faith: it is an unbelieving thought he hath then of God; for a believing thought of Chriſt would give him another thought of God, even as a Friend and Father in him. This then, I hope, is an uſeful inference, That the ſum of Chriſtian knowledge is Chriſt.

2. Hence ſee what is the *beſt matter for meditation*, and the *beſt rule for ſelf-examination.* Here is the moſt noble ſubject of meditation, namely, to think of Chriſt; and here is the moſt excellent rule for examination, namely, to aſk our ſouls that queſtion, *What think we of Chriſt?* Meditation and ſelf-examination are duties much neglected among us; they are ſpiritual exerciſes, directly croſs and oppoſite to our vain, wandering, idle, and unfixed hearts. A man will rather go betwixt the

ſtilts

ſtilts of a plouch from morning to evening, than travel betwixt theſe two duties for one half hour, though yet they are like the ſtilts of that plouch by which the fallow-ground of the heart muſt be plowed up; but when the thoughts begin to come in betwixt theſe two ſtilts of meditation and ſelf-examination, behold on a ſudden (to ſpeak it in broad Scots) they *quit the plough, and run away with the harrows.* No doubt, you will know this from ſad experience, that your thoughts are in this matter like wild vitious horſes, running mad here and there through the fields, without keeping any road, or obſerving any rule; but here is the beſt matter and rule, both for regulating our thoughts in meditation and ſelf-examination.—As for *meditation*, the beſt way is to think of Chriſt: why, you may think upon a promiſe, but out of Chriſt you will find no comfort in it; for, *all the promiſes are Yea and Amen in him;* and ſo you will not find it your own, but by looking to Chriſt: yea, you may think upon God, but out of Chriſt you will find no comfort in him; *I remembered God, and was troubled*, Pſal. lxxvii. 3.: but the antidote againſt that trouble is believing thoughts of Chriſt; therefore ſays Chriſt to his diſciples, *Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me*, John xiv. 1. If you think upon the law, you will find there you are drowned in debt, both to the command and curſe, till once ye look to Chriſt, the *end of the law for righteouſneſs.* If you think upon your duties that God calls you to, you will find them a heavy taſk, till once you look to Chriſt, and then you will find his *yoke is eaſy*, and his *commands are not grievous.*—Again, as to *ſelf-examination*, the beſt rule here is to ſay to your ſouls, *What think ye of Chriſt?* They are but proud ſelf-conceited perſons that do not think highly of Chriſt, and God approves them not; 2 Cor. x. 17, 18. *He that glories*, ſays the apoſtle, *let him glory in the Lord: for not he that commends himſelf is approved, but whom the Lord commends;* intimating, that they that glory only in the Lord, they diſcommend themſelves, and are commended and approved of God; but they that do not glory in the Lord, nor think highly of him, they commend themſelves, but are diſcommended

mended and disapproved of God; yea, they deceive themselves; *If any man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself*, Gal. vi. 3. Self-conceit is self-deceit: and as they are self-deceivers who are self-exalters; they think not much of Christ, who think much of themselves: and so, to enquire what you think of Christ, is the best way to find yourself out, what you are in state or frame. You may, by this rule, know how to judge of your own thoughts; you may think of a thousand good things; you may think of sermons, you may think of death, judgment, and eternity; but though you may think seriously on these subjects, yet the rule whereby to judge of the rectitude of your thoughts about them is here: do they lead you to high thoughts of Christ, in whom alone we can think of death, without horror; judgment, without terror; and eternity, without fear or dread?

3. Hence we may see, that Christ himself is the *best Judge of men's state;* for he can look into the heart and thoughs of men, and say, *What think ye of Christ?* All judgment is committed to the Son of God, and he will cast many whom the world approves; because, whatever men think of them, yet he knows that they think little of him and his Father. Also, he will approve of some whom the world casts; because, however the world thinks little of them, yet he knows that they think much of him and his Father; for they know him, and whose son he is. Christ's question shews, that he knows our thoughts; for, to whom shall we give an account of our answer to this question? None in all the world knows what we think, but God himself; and *Christ is God.* Christ discovers the ignorance of the Pharisees here also, and shews that he knew their thoughts were amiss: *If he be David's son*, says he, *how does David in spirit call him Lord?* Here they were confounded, and might have been convicted that there thoughts were naught. Indeed, this was one of these things that old Simeon declared concerning Christ, that *he should be a sign that should be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed*, Luke ii. 35. Thus, when Christ met with the woman of Samaria, he revealed many

ny thoughts of her heart to her, and gave her a view of all her lewd tricks: *Come and see a man,* says she, *that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?* As Satan presented to our Lord Jesus the whole body of the world at a glance; so Christ can let us see a black sight of all our sins at once, so as to force us to acknowledge that he is the Christ, that knows our hearts and thoughts. But,

4. Hence we may see, what is the *great end and design of a gospel-ministry,* namely, to discover Christ, and remove the prejudices of people's minds against him; to rectify their mistakes about him; and to fill them with a high opinion of them. The sum of a gospel minister's business, is, to commend his Master, saying, *What think ye of Christ?* and that both in his preaching, and praying, and catechising, and visiting. The whole of their doctrine and practice is, as it were, a voice preaching Christ. If they preach the *law,* and its curses and threatenings against Christless and impenitent sinners, it is to *lead them to Christ,* and to drive them to the *city of refuge.* If they preach *faith,* they make Christ the *author and finisher,* as well as the *object* of it. If they preach *repentance,* they make Christ, as exalted by the right-hand of God *to be a Prince and Saviour to give repentance,* the fountain of it; and Christ crucified, viewed by faith, to be the immediate root of it. If they preach *duties* and *new obedience,* they make Christ the ALPHA and OMEGA of it.——Ministers may indeed speak much of Christ in their sermons, and yet not preach Christ: As for example, If one should preach of Christ mainly as a Law-giver, to be obeyed, and little or nothing of Christ as a Law-fulfiller, to be believed in, and served from love, because of his having saved us from the yoke of the law; for, a covenant of life and death, upon doing or not doing, may be preached, and called the gospel of Christ, in a mistake, while it is only the law that is preached, and not *Christ, the end of the law for righteousness:* and you may know it by this among other things, the tendency of such old-covenant doctrine, is to lead men to this question, not, *What think ye of Christ?* but, *What think ye of yourselves?*

and

and, *What are you doing, that you may have eternal life?* Why, the man begins to think, God is ſtanding upon ſome doing terms yet with him; and therefore, in order to life, he muſt do ſo and ſo: thus he is led to himſelf, and not to Chriſt. But goſpel-doctrine tends to lead a man wholly out of himſelf, and wholly in to Chriſt; for, whatever be the text, the ſtrain of goſpel-doctrine is, *What think ye of Chriſt?* It is not the deſign of goſpel-miniſters to commend themſelves, but Chriſt. There is a ſett of miniſters, ſay ſome, that ſet up themſelves above others, and ſtudy only to commend themſelves, to the diſparagement of all others, as if none but they were goſpel-miniſters; but, my friends, if any man's concern for Chriſt's cauſe and intereſt, or for his Maker's glory, ſhall commend him, he needs not think ſtrange though the world of Phariſees envy him, as they did Chriſt himſelf, when his doctrine and life commended him. I will tell you what commendation a goſpel-miniſter hunts moſt after; it is that of Paul, 2 Cor. iii. 1, 2, 3. to have an *epiſtle commendatory in the hearts of hearers*, by the power of the Spirit of God accompanying the word, and leaving an impreſſion there, that it is indeed the word of God, and not of men, and that God is in it of a truth; he would deſire, with the ſame apoſtle, 2 Cor. iv. 2. to *commend himſelf, by the manifeſtation of the truth, to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God.* Let truth be nick-named and reproached, as it will, the evidence of truth will commend itſelf to the conſciences of all the lovers thereof. Mean time, it is poſſible that a man may commend Chriſt, in order to commend himſelf as an evangelical preacher; for ſuch a good work he is indeed commendable, but for ſuch a bad end, it is to God only that he is accountable. But it is poſſible alſo to know if a man intend not himſelf by preaching Chriſt; for ſometimes there is ſuch a power and virtue attending the word, and ſuch a ſmell and ſavour of heaven with the preacher, as carries a ſecret demonſtration of his ſpirituality and purity of intention into the heart even of the carnal by-ſtanders, let be theſe whom he hath enlightened with the ſpirit of diſcerning, to know the voice of *Chriſt* from a *ſtranger.*

However,

However, Sirs, think of miniſters what ye will, the great queſtion is, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Wo to us, if our only deſign be to bring people to ſay, *What think ye of ſuch a miniſter, and what think ye of ſuch a ſermon?* If we make Chriſt a covert for raiſing our own applauſe, he can inſtantly command an angel to ſmite us, as he did Herod, and order us to be eaten up of worms, for not giving God the glory. Oh! what ſhould ye think of us? though we magnify our office as ambaſſadors of Chriſt, yet, in ourſelves, ſome of us are as frail, feeble, ſinful pieces of duſt as any of you; we are among the chief of ſinners, as well as you; we need the blood and Spirit of Chriſt to juſtify and ſanctify us, as well as you; let us decreaſe, but let Chriſt increaſe. If any of us be made inſtruments of good to your ſouls, let it engage you to think the more of Chriſt, that could work ſuch a work by ſuch weak and unlikely inſtruments: He puts the treaſure in earthen veſſels, that the *excellency of the power may be of God*, and not of us. Whatever honour God calls you to put upon them for their work's ſake, yet if your eſteem centre upon the miniſter, or his work, ſaying, *O I think much of ſuch a miniſter, and I think much of ſuch a ſermon*, you need to begin to think better; for the grand queſtion is, *What think ye of Chriſt?* It is indeed the beſt ſermon that works the higheſt thoughts of Chriſt.

Secondly, The *ſecond uſe* is for *conviction* and *reproof* to all thoſe that are filled with unworthy and unbecoming thoughts of Chriſt, with ignorant and erroneous thoughts of him. Some have no thoughts of Chriſt at all; ſome that think of him, yet think nothing of him; ſome think little of him; ſome think hardly and harſhly of him; ſome think meanly and baſely of him: to ſpeak of all the baſe and mean thoughts of Chriſt that the world is filled with, would be impoſſible. Oh! how baſely do the Arians think of Chriſt, and his ſupreme Godhead! If I had not found it neceſſary to confine myſelf to the firſt branch of Chriſt's queſtion here, *What think ye of Chriſt?* The other branch, namely, *Whoſe Son is he?* might have led me particularly to have treat-

ed the doctrine of Christ's Sonship, and eternal Godhead, and co-equality with the Father, in opposition to the damnable heresy, which some tell us is creeping in to Scotland, as well as it is raging in England and Ireland: I shall only say, that the question concerns them, as well as the Pharisees of old, *What think ye of Christ?* and, *Whose Son is he?* Oh! can they say no more than, with the Pharisees, that he is *the Son of David?* Then, *How does David in Spirit call him Lord?* And if he be David's Lord and God, how can he be so, and yet not co-equal with the Father? For we have not two Lords, or two God; *The Lord our God is one Lord;* therefore Christ, being Lord, must be One with the Father essentially: *Christ is the true God, and eternal life.* But I cannot now enlarge on this subject. Oh! may Arian doctors begin to read over the Christian catechism again, and learn to answer this question, *What think ye of Christ?*—Again, as Arians think nothing of his Godhead, but, as if it were, an inferior deity; so some, that pretend a greater respect to him, yet think but basely of him: Papists think nothing of *the imputation of his righteousness;* Socinians think nothing of the *sacrifice of his death;* Arminians think nothing of the *power of his grace;* Quakers think nothing of his *word;* Atheists think nothing of his *Spirit;* Deists think nothing of his *revelations.*—If we look out to the *world*, the Pagans have no thoughts of him at all: the Mahometants think him nothing but a great prophet at best, and inferior to Mahomet: the Jews think him nothing but an impostor, and that he is not the Christ, but only the *carpenter's son*; or, it may be, a *blasphemer*, that had a *devil.*—And, again, if we look in to the *church*, even the purest churches in this world, among which I would fain hope the poor church of Scotland hath not yet lost the vogue; yet, Oh! how many dark and confused notions; yea, unwarrantable and unworthy thoughts of Christ may be there discovered, even among these churches that are supposed to be pure, Christian, protestant, and reformed churches! It were endless, to speak of doctrinal and practical errors that swarm in the churches, whereby contempt is poured upon Christ and his doctrine,

trine, his truth, his gospel, and his yoke; his loving yoke of gospel-obedience. What low thoughts of Christ appear in the strain of doctrine, that tends to confound the old and new covenant, law and gospel, faith and works, without ridding marches duly betwixt Christ, and all his rivals and competitors, that seek to share with him in the glory of salvation-work! What low thoughts of Christ appear in that sort of practice, that consists either in a life of legal righteousness, or a life of open wickedness! What low thoughts of Christ, as our righteousness, appear from every thing that tends to lead sinners back to the law as a covenant of works! And what low thoughts of Christ, as our sanctification, appear from every thing that tends to lead sinners off from the law, as a rule of holiness! How is Christ, and his merit, and righteousness disesteemed, to the encouragement of self and self-righteousness! And, how is Christ, and his Spirit and grace disesteemed, to the encouragement of sin and licentiousness*! It is not my business to expose the nakedness of any: they are singular persons, that are helped to guard against all right-hand and left-hand extremes, so as to think no less of Christ as a Lord, than Christ as a Saviour; and to esteem a whole Christ, without setting up one part of Christ against another: but my work especially is, to strike at the root of all that disesteem of Christ, that takes place in the world, especially in the visible church. Whence is it, that the world thinks so little of Christ, and so naughtily of him? Why,

1. *Ignorance* is a cause of it, *Ignoti nulla cupido;* as it is impossible for them to undervalue Christ, who have the saving knowledge of him; so it is not possible that any can prize him, whom they do not know. Many are like Festus, Acts xxv. 19. who told Agrippa, that Paul's enemies had questions against him, concerning one JESUS; Christ is to them a certain man, one *Jesus*, but for their part they know little of him, and are indifferent about him: as a blind man, what he does not

* The above topics are all touched at, and many of them treated at considerable length, Vol. I. Serm. IV. Vol. II. Serm. XXVII,—XXVII. Vol. III. Serm. XXXIV,—XXXVII.

ſee, he cares not for, though he be told of it as never ſo fair and beautiful; ſo natural men are *blind*, 2 Cor. iv. 4.; they can ſee no beauty or comlineſs in Chriſt, for which they ſhould deſire him. Therefore, though they may hear of his glory and comelineſs, and be a little moved therewith, yet they care not ſo much for him, as to give him the higheſt room in their thoughts and eſteem.

2. *Unbelief* is another cauſe why people think little of Chriſt; if they would believe, they would ſee the glory of God in him, and ſee him a glorious and lovely object: but, through unbelief, Chriſt is lothſome inſtead of lovely; hence his doctrine is lothſome, his righteouſneſs, his holineſs, his croſs. Unbelief makes people think Chriſt is a cheat, and God is a liar, and that he ſays what he hath no mind to do; it makes them think that he is not able to ſave, or that he is not willing to ſave. Oh! how baſely does unbelief think of Chriſt! Unbelief alſo will make a man think God like unto himſelf, and an approver of his ſin, Pſal. l. 21. *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thyſelf;* and ſo it makes them to think of Chriſt but very baſely.

3. *Pride* and *ſelf-righteouſneſs* is another cauſe why people think little of Chriſt, Rom. x. 3. While people think much of themſelves, and their doing, they cannot think much of Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs. This is that legal righteouſneſs that makes men to do with the garment of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as the Ammonites did with the garments of David's meſſengers, they clipt them ſo ſhort, that they were not able to hide their ſhame: but if it was a terror and ſmiting to David's heart, to cut off but a little of the lap of Saul's garment, ought it not to be a terror to us, to cut off a lap of Chriſt's garment, or to clip it ſo ſhort, as to think that it cannot cover us completely, without ſome of our own rotten righteouſneſs ſewed to it?—Again, it is this legal principle that makes believers themſelves think it cannot be that they are accepted as righteous, perfectly righteous in the ſight of God, through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed; why, becauſe they want a feeling of that righteouſneſs in themſelves, which the legal heart is ready

to

to make the foundation of pardon and acceptance: but, as Luther ſaid, "We muſt not feel, but believe, that "we are thus righteous;" yea, it is this hidden principle of ſelf-righteouſneſs, that will make a miniſter preach Chriſt alone for righteouſneſs, as if he were as much for exalting Chriſt, as any that ever preached; and yet, before ever you know well where you are, you will find him bringing in ſome legal duty or qualification, in order to your being juſtified, that will ſpoil all; juſt like an untoward milkcow, that will let down a good deal of milk very well, but then, with an unhappy kick of her foot, ſhe will tumble all down to the ground, when ſhe hath done: even ſo, the ſincere milk of the word of life, and juſtification through Chriſt's righteouſneſs alone, may be let down abundantly, that you would think the man as evangelical as Paul himſelf, or any body that ever preached the goſpel: but, behold, of a ſudden, the legal foot gives it a kick, and ſpills all when he hath done, or elſe the law ſets her foot among the midſt of the milk; I mean, mixes ſome dirty righteouſneſs, and qualification of our own, with the fair and clean milk of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, ſo as the poor ſoul loaths to take a drink of it. Why, I thought this milk was for me, and this righteouſneſs of Chriſt was for me; but there came in a qualification, that, before ever I could be juſtified, I behoved to do ſo and ſo, and be ſo and ſo humbled, and penitent; and ſure I am, I want ſuch a qualification, and therefore all is loſt to me. But, poor ſoul, whatever come in this way, tending to make you look into yourſelf, and ſtand off from Chriſt, you may know it is but a ſwitch of the law of works; ſlight it, and ſet it off, if it hinder you from thinking of Chriſt as your ALL, and from *buying and drinking his wine and milk, without money and without price.*

4. *Carnal reaſon* is another cauſe, why people think little of Chriſt; for, *the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, they are fooliſhneſs to him,* 1 Cor. ii. 14. There is natural reaſon, which is ſo much cried up at this day, when man goes about to meaſure God's truths, and ſpiritual myſteries, with this ſhort line of human reaſon; and finding, that reaſon agrees with

with these mysteries, no more than the sound of ram-horns, in the view of carnal reason, was like to bring down the walls of Jericho; behold, no fault must be found with lady *Reason*, but Christ's gospel, and the mysteries thereof, must bear the blame, namely, That they are foolish and absurd; and therefore not to be received or esteemed by such wise heads as they are, who little remember the apostle's admonition, 1 Cor. iii. 18. *If any man will be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.* Hence Luther gave it as an infallible mark that the gospel was not truly preached, and was not the gospel indeed, namely, "If it was so brewed, fitted, "and adapted unto reason, that all approved of it, and "yielded to it peaceably; for, how then should Christ "be a *sign that should be spoken against*, Luke ii. 34. "and a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence?*" This leads me to a

5. Cause, why people think so little of Christ, namely, the *calumny* cast upon the gospel of Christ, and the dispensers of it. Is it possible for the wisdom of the world to hold her peace from speaking against that which she judges to be foolishness? How then shall Christ be not only for *the rising*, but the *falling of many in Israel?* "Mark, says Luther, where this fall is, even in Israel, "in that people that seemed to be Christ's only people, and "upon Christ's side." It is even in Israel that many fall, and in Israel that Christ is spoken against. Thus, when he came to be a minister of the old and antient truths of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, Rom. xv. 8. when he began to preach the same, the greatest part of the multitude cried out, *What new doctrine is this?* Mark i. 27. Whence we may see, that when a church hath gone off from any antient truth, or old way of expressing it, no sooner are these old truths revived, or set in their antient frame, than presently it is called a *new scheme of doctrine* *. However, by this means, Satan gets much of his will; for it tends to make people think little of Christ, and his gospel.

6. *Division* is another cause, why people think so little of Christ. There is a twofold *division* that I mean;

* See the reason of this assigned above, vol. I. p. 238. vol. II. p. 304, 305. vol. III. p. 46.

there

there is not only an outward church-diviſion, but an inward heart-diviſion. No doubt the former hath a great hand in making many to ſlight Chriſt; for, when a church is divided, the generality of people are apt to be ſtumbled: Why, ſay they, we know not whom to believe, and what ſide to turn to; every party ſays they are for Chriſt, and therefore the indifferent ſort of people think we will even let Chriſt and them both alone. But it is eſpecially inward *heart-diviſion* that I mean: when the heart is divided betwixt Chriſt and the world, betwixt Chriſt and idols or luſts: the world, and the luſts thereof, will be ſure to carry away the heart, that it cannot think highly of Chriſt, while it thinks ſo much of other things. A man may as ſoon, with one eye, obſerve the ſtars, and with the other, meaſure the earth at the ſame time, as the can think highly of Chriſt, and his idols too: therefore, when Satan, like the pretended mother, ſays, *Let it be neither thine nor mine, but divide it;* God, who is the Lord of the heart, ſays, Let the devil rather have all; for God will either have all or none. Now, when men have any approved idol in the heart, Chriſt is deſpiſed, his rival gets all: the divided heart, then, is a heart ſeparate, and joined to idols; and this diviſion cauſes diſeſteem of Chriſt, ſo as the man cannot think of Chriſt, he muſt, of neceſſity, think of ſome other thing. See how they that were invited to the great ſupper, the goſpel-banquet, put it off with excuſes; Luke xiv. 18. *I have bought a piece of ground, and I muſt needs go and ſee it*, ſays one: mark the phraſe, *I muſt needs go;* he pleads neceſſity, and neceſſity hath no law. When the heart is not wholly for Chriſt, of neceſſity it will be for the world, and the luſts thereof: and he that is not for Chriſt, Satan will conſtantly find him enough of buſineſs to take up his thoughts, and which the man will reckon ſo neceſſary, that he will have no leiſure to think of Chriſt. Now, when this queſtion is propoſed, *What think ye of Chriſt?* or, when Chriſt is offered, there are two ſorts of perſons that ſhew very little eſteem of him; yea, that ſhew they do nothing but deſpiſe him in their heart: the apoſtle compares them to dogs and ſwine, 2 Pet. ii. 22.

(1.) There

(1.) There are ſome like *ſwine*, namely, the *profane worldly people*; for, as ſwine think more of the mire, than any thing elſe; ſo, if one go to drive him away from the mire, he only gives a grunt, and away he goes to the mire again, or elſe rooting his ſnout in the earth: ſo profane and worldly people love to wallow in the mire of ſin, and to be rooting and rotting in the earth; and if any go about to drive them from ſin, and to pull their noſes out of the earth, they go away grunting and grumbling in their heart, that they cannot be allowed their neceſſary pleaſure and profit; and they return to the wallowing in the mire, and rooting in the earth as eagerly as ever. All the anſwer they give to the queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* is a grunt; they are a little diſturbed about it, and moved a little to mutter ſome words, according as they are affected; but away they go grunting, with their mouth towards the duſt: it is not Chriſt they are thinking of.

(2.) There are others like *dogs*, namely, *legaliſts*, and *ſelf-juſticiaries*, that are worſe enemies to the goſpel of Chriſt, than the worldling, or openly profane; for, as a dog thinks more of a ſtinking carcaſe than any thing elſe; ſo, if you go about to drive the dog from his vomit, or ſtinking carrion, he will be ready either to bark or bite, or flee in your face: even ſo, legaliſts and ſelf-juſticiaries, think more of the ſtinking carcaſe of their own righteouſneſs, and legal duties, than any thing elſe; and when any goes about to draw them away from the high eſteem of the filthy rags of their own righteouſneſs, ſhewing the lothſomneſs and vileneſs thereof, the abſolute neceſſity of being wholly denied thereto, and adorned with nothing but Chriſt's perfect righteouſneſs for juſtification before God; if we ſhow them how God juſtifies the ungodly, and how the righteouſneſs of God, without the works of the law, is manifeſted in the goſpel; why, then they go away from ordinances, barking and biting, ſlandering, and calumniating the goſpel, which they do not underſtand or eſteem, as if it were a doctrine of licentiouſneſs, and an encouragement of ſin; and they return to their vomit, their ſtinking carrion, neglecting the heavenly carcaſe, to which the believing

eagles

eagles gather together, that they may live by faith upon the Son of God.——Now, both these sorts of persons, however differently affected, yet agree in their slighting of Christ, upon different grounds. What do they think of Christ? Nothing at all. The Lord convince and awaken such!

Thirdly, The *third use* may be for *examination* and *trial*. Let this great question of the Christian Catechism be a touchstone, to try what metal you are of, and to understand what is your state now, and what will be your lot for ever: it is, and will be, according as you answer this question, *What think ye of Christ?* For helping you into this enquiry, I would direct you to try it, 1. By the quality of your thoughts. 2. By the object thereof.

1st, Try yourselves upon this question, by the *quality* of your thoughts; for it is not a simple thought, like a flying vapour, that is here intended, but a qualified thought, that you are to try yourselves by; for example,

1. Right and becoming thoughts of Christ are *preferring* and *superlative* thoughts; Christ is beyond comparison to the man: the language of such a thought of Christ is this, O what can he be compared unto! If you compare him to a *rose*; he is the *Rose of Sharon*: If you compare him to a *lily*; he is *the lily of the valley*: If you compare him to a *sun*; he is the *Sun of righteousness*: If you compare him to a *star*; he is the *bright and Morning-star*: If you compare him to a *chief* and *honourable worthy*; he is the *Chief among ten thousand*: If you compare him to a *head*; he is the *Head of principalities and powers*: If you compare him to a *flower*; he is the *Flower of the stem of Jesse*: If you compare him to a *branch*; he is the *Branch of righteousness*: If you compare him to an *advocate*; he is an *Advocate with the Father*: If you compare him to a *counsellor*; he is the *wonderful Counsellor*: If you compare him to a *king*; he is the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*: If you compare him to a *prince*; he is the *Prince of peace*; *the Prince of the kings of the earth*: If you compare him with *men*; he is *fairer than the sons of men*: If you compare him

with *angels*; he is the *Lord of angels*; *let all the angels of God worſhip him.*—The man does in his thoughts prefer Chriſt to all things in heaven and earth; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth whom I deſire beſides thee*, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *In all things he gives him the pre-eminence*, Col. i. 18. Then again,

2. Right and becoming thoughts of Chriſt are *admiring* and *adoring* thoughts; *exalting* and *extolling* thoughts: if you have due thoughts of him in your heart, you will find in your heart to bleſs him, ſaying, as Pſal. cxviii. 26.

Bleſſed is he, in God's great name,
That cometh us to ſave:
We, from the houſe which to the Lord
Pertains, you bleſſed have.

And, *O magnify the Lord with me:* you would wiſh that all the world would fall a bleſſing, and praiſing, and extolling him. They are glorying and glorifying thoughts: the man's heart glories in the Lord, and glorifies the Lord; and would deſire his glory might be advanced above the heavens. Why, becauſe,

3. Right and becoming thoughts of Chriſt are *ſpiritual* and *ſublimating* thoughts; natural thoughts can riſe no higher than nature, 1 Cor. ii. 14.; but ſpiritual thoughts, being managed by the conduct and influence of the Spirit of God; *The Spirit ſearcheth all things, even the deep things of God.* Indeed, the Spirit of God is the *all in all* of theſe thoughts; for he comes, according to the promiſe, and *glorifies Chriſt*, by *receiving the things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them unto the ſoul*, John xvi. 14. *They that are after the fleſh, do mind the things of the fleſh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 5. Indeed, the things of Chriſt, and the things of the Spirit, are the ſame; no human natural wiſdom can reach to them: wiſe naturaliſts may indeed dream of them, and ſpeak of them like a man ſpeaking in his dream of the light of the ſun, while yet it is dark night with him, and he was never awakened, convinced, and ſavingly illuminated.

4. Right and becoming thoughts of Chriſt are *applying* and *appropriating* thoughts; inſomuch that the man takes

takes Christ into his soul, as he takes meat and drink into his body; *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*, John vi. 54. This is that believing thought, without which a man receives no benefit, any more than a man that wants meat can have benefit by thinking upon meat, without eating thereof. The man takes in Christ to himself for his own good. To think of Christ, without applying him, is like a man thinking of meat and drink, without taking it; which does no good.

QUEST. *But can there be no right thinking of Christ, without applying?* Indeed, man, the thought is but a vain thought, an unbelieving though, an unprofitable thought, if it be not either an applying thought of Christ, or a thought of Christ in order to application; like a sick man receiving a cordial out of his physician's hand, he takes it from him, not to hold it in his hand, and no more, but in order to make it his own, by drinking it down for his refreshment, healing, and strengthening. The man's taking the cordial in his hand, is not properly the taking that the physician means, but his taking it in to himself, or down into his stomach, is the proper taking of it: yet the former taking of it is his hand is right, in so far as it is in order to the other; so here, a bare thinking of Christ is of no avail, unless it be an applying thought, or a thought in order to application: and though the thoughts of Christ, in order to application, be not application itself properly; yet it is good, in so far as it is a taking Christ into your hand, in order to take him into your heart, and that for your own souls refreshment, life, health, and everlasting salvation.

5. Right thoughts of Christ are *sinking* and *serious* thoughts, in opposition to swimming, roving, and indifferent thoughts. Some have a wild thought about Christ, that if he be good for any thing, they shall have a share of him, as well as others: but what he is, and how they shall come by him, they never deeply pondered; for they were never touched with a sense of their sin, misery, and undone state without him. A swimming thought of Christ is like that of some ignorant

creatures, crying out in a ſurprize, *Chriſt, have mercy on us;* but the thought that ſinks deep is like that of the publican ſmiting on his breaſt, and crying, *Lord, have mercy on me a ſinner.* But there are learned fools in the world, as well as ignorant ones, that have nothing but ſwimming thoughts, roving ſpeculations; and yet, it may be, they can ſpeak of Chriſt to better purpoſe, you would think, than one that is exerciſed to godlineſs: but yet theſe two ſorts differ as far as the pleading of an orator differs from the pleading of a malefactor; the one vents his great wit, but the other his heart-concern. Again,

6. Right thoughts of Chriſt are *trading* and *trafficking* thoughts; the man hath it for his conſtant trade, to think highly of Chriſt, and give him the chief room in his heart and eſteem. In this reſpect, his *heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord. The deſire of our ſoul is to thy name* ſays the church, *and to the remembrance of thee. With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, and with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early,* Iſa. xxvi. 8, 9. There was a trading with heaven late at night, and early in the morning. Yea, David makes it *morning,* and *evening,* and *mid-time of the day;* yea more, *ſeven times a day;* and yet moſt of all, when he ſays, *My ſoul breaks for the longing that it hath to thy righteous judgments at* ALL TIMES. It is a conſtant trading. True, indeed, there are innumerable intermiſſions in the believer's Chriſtian thoughts and deſires: but as we ſay, It is ſuch a man's trade to buy and ſell, while he follows that employment, though it is not every moment he is thus occupied; but though there be ſeveral intermiſſions in the exerciſe of his employment, yet the bent of his mind goes that way: ſo here, we may call this the believer's conſtant trade; becauſe, whatever intermiſſions there are in this, his mental trading with heaven, yet the bent of his ſoul is towards Chriſt: yea, it is not only his buſineſs, but his pleaſure; and that makes him go on. If a man thrive at his trade, he takes pleaſure in it; and if not, he is in danger of giving it over. We go ſometimes upon buſineſs to theſe we never ſaw, nor care for ſeeing again, and whom we take little pleaſure to converſe with: they that never go

to

to Christ but merely upon business, and never find any pleasure in conversing with him, surely they are too great strangers to him. Certainly, believer, there is too much strangeness betwixt Christ and you, if your business you have ado with Christ be seldom your pleasure, or if it be merely business that takes you to him, saying, "I want a pardon, I want a promise, I want "this and that." But, is there never a love-visit you make to him, saying, "Lord, I have got a pardon, and "I am come to bless thee for it; I have got a promise, "and I am come to praise thee for it; thy company is "sweet, and I am come to get thee in my arms, that "I may have more of thy embraces?" O sweet trading! *My meditation of him shall be sweet.* Indeed, these thoughts of Christ that are right, are glad, joyful, satisfying thoughts.

7. Right thoughts of Christ are *humbling* thoughts, and yet emboldening thoughts. O but these that think highly of Christ, cannot but think meanly of themselves, saying with Job, *Now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* The believer, that thinks duly of Christ, hath both the highest and lowest thoughts in the world; the highest thoughts of Christ, and the lowest thoughts of himself: and yet this humility doth not hinder his boldness; for, he hath *boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*, Heb. x. 19. The more he thinks of Christ, the more humble thoughts he has of himself; and yet, the more he thinks of Christ, the more bold he is towards God. It is a bold humility, and a humble boldness; hence, when he is *worshipping God in the Spirit*, two other things concur, namely, a *rejoicing in Christ Jesus*, and a *having no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. iii. 3. Oh! says the soul, I have no ground of confidence in myself, but I have all ground of confidence in Christ! Unworthy wretch am I, as ever was out of hell; but behold, there is the worthy blood, the worthy righteousness of Christ, *the Lord our righteousness*; therefore, unworthy as I am, I am warranted to be bold in claiming all through Christ. I see the holy of holies is open to me through this blood of Christ.

8. Right

8. Right thoughts of Christ are *assimulating* thoughts, *sanctifying* and *transforming* thoughts; 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory* indeed, that a believer that hath Christ in him, may think that he hath more sin than ever, and that sin is on the growing hand, instead of the decaying; but he is *of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* They that see Christ, cannot but love him, and desire to be like him, for there is a smitting favour in his face. They that are in heaven are *like him*, because they *see him as he is*: the beatifical vision brings in full conformity to him. Now, a spiritual thought, and a believing thought, is a mental sight; a fiducial vision of him: and the more of this, the more conformity to him in holiness. The thought that endears Christ, imbitters sin: a man cannot think duly of the lovelinesse of Christ, without thinking of the lothsomnesse of sin. O! when the Sun of righteousnesse ariseth, there is a heat that accompanies the light, and warms the heart. And, indeed, high thoughts of Christ do warm the heart, and make it burn within him; and heart-warming thoughts tend to burn up corruption; for, as Christ comes into the heart, sin must go out, according to the measure and degree of his coming. As a talent of gold, or some weighty metal, falling into a vessel of water, dashes out all that is in the vessel, to make room for itself; so, Christ coming in to the heart, dashes out sin to make room for himself. And, indeed, they that have honourable thoughts of Christ in their hearts, cannot have favourable thoughts of sin; because, whenever Christ comes into the thoughts, if he do not dash out the life, yet he dashes out the love of sin. What, man! will you say that *Christ is in you*, and that you have faith, and yet the love of sin as great as ever, and you can indulge yourself in whoredom, and drunkenness, and lying, and swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, or any other piece of wickedness and profanity. You will never make a good man believe that Christ is in you, or that you have faith, even though you should swear by your faith, as some do, who even thereby testify to the world, that they

they have no faith at all; being so prodigal of it, as to swear away the faith which they say or think they have. So far as Christ comes in, sin goes out. It is possible mistaken: it is in this case as it is with a cup of water; put silver and gold in a cup, and the water swells up; and the more you put in, the more will the water swell and run over, that you would think there is still more water than before, the more gold is put in: Christ is the tried gold; and the more the vessel of the believer's heart is filled with it, the more may sin appear to rise and swell, and run over all its banks: this frightens and terrifies the poor soul, because now he sees that which, it may be, was hid in the vessel of his heart before, and out of his sight. But it is not that there is more sin, more water than before, but more gold cast in; only every dash perhaps makes the water flee about, that he thinks he was never so full of sin and corruption as now: yet still it holds good, Christ's coming in makes sin flee out; and the more it seems to rise and swell, the more does the soul's indignation rise and swell against it. All right thoughts of Christ are sanctifying thoughts.

9. High thoughts of Christ are *new* thoughts; they that suppose they have thoughts well enough of Christ all their days, and have no better thoughts, no higher thoughts, no weightier thoughts, no clearer thoughts of him than ever they had, surely they are strangers to this esteem of Christ that we are enquiring into: *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are done away, and all things are become a new;* and new thoughts among the rest. Where grace comes, there the *wicked man forsakes his way*, and the *unrighteous man his thoughts;* his carnal thoughts, his legal thoughts: they are changed into spiritual thoughts, evangelical thoughts, such as he never had before. And,

10. New thoughts of Christ will bring in *new words* and *new actions;* the words follow the thoughts. You may then turn the question, *What think ye of Christ?* to another, *What speak ye of him?* for, *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.* If you think it ill-breeding, or ungenteel manners, as many do, to speak of Christ and spiritual things, and cannot drop a word for

him

him from Sabbath to Sabbath, who can believe that you think highly of Christ. Nay, that which is most in the heart and thoughts, will be most in your lips.—The actions also follow the thoughts: can you think highly of Christ, and yet do nothing for him? Nay, new and precious thoughts of Christ will bring in new gospel-obedience from a principle of love to him.—Thus you may try yourselves now on this question, *What think ye of Christ?* by the *quality* of your thoughts. Examination is the very design of the question, namely, to discover what our thoughts of Christ are; and therefore I insist mainly upon this.——But having tried yourselves by the quality of your thoughts,

2*dly*, Try yourselves by the *object* thereof, namely, CHRIST: *What think ye of* CHRIST? And here such a large field presents itself, that it is impossible I can go through it all. Besides what was said on the doctrinal part, I would ask some further questions concerning Christ, not only for examination, but for raising your esteem of him.

1. What think ye of his *eminent station* he is in as Mediator betwixt God and you, and his relation to God and you; his relation to God by nature, as his eternal Son; and by office, as his righteous Servant? God calls you to wonder at him in this station; Isa. xlii. 1. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth.* His Father called him forth to serve him and you, and to serve him for your sake; to serve him as a Redeemer, to ransom you; to serve him as a Surety, to pay your debt; to serve him as a Physician, to heal your souls; to serve him in all the offices that your need requires: and what think ye of him?

2. What think ye of his *travels*, in order to accomplish the work that belongs to that station and relation wherein he stands to God and you? The travel of his eternal mind before time, when *his delights were with the sons of men*; the travel of his soul, and the travel of his body in time; his travel from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven again; in all his mediatory actings; his incarnation, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession! O but the Lord can give a glance

of

of his glory in the very naming of these things! How did he travel as in birth, when he went about his *Father's business!* Luke ii. 49.

3. What think ye of his *treasures;* his unsearchable riches that are stored up in him for the benefit of poor sinners, having received these gifts for men? *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him;* all, and infinitely more than we lost in the first Adam, is treasured up in the second Adam. O what may a poor, ignorant, witless sinner think of a treasure of wisdom, for his illumination! What may a guilty sinner think of a treasure of righteousness, for his justification! What may a filthy sinner think of a treasure of grace, for his sanctification! And what may a miserable sinner think of a treasure of mercy, for his complete redemption! Yet all these treasures, and infinitely more than we can name, are in Christ; *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,* 1 Cor. i. 30. O the fulness of grace that is in him, that *out of his fulness we may receive grace for grace!* He is the storehouse of all God's treasures; for all is treasured up in him, that we may be complete in him, who will by faith make use of him. And what think ye of him!

4. What think ye of his *thoughts?* Psal. cxxxix. 17. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! if I count them,* says he, *they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.* O his thoughts! dwell with wonder and admiration upon God's thoughts. Is it nothing to you, that ever he had thoughts of love towards the like of you; thoughts of pardon, thoughts of peace; *thoughts of good and not of evil, to give you an expected end!* O believer, his thoughts are not precious to the rest of the world; but what are they to you? Think you nothing that his thought and care should have been about you from eternity, and now manifested in time? Having loved you with an everlasting love, how is he drawing you with loving-kindness? Besides all his providential care in bringing things about for your good, and that in a way beyond your contrivance and foresight; yea, in such a manner as never entered into your thoughts.

You little thought what was his design in ordering your lot in such a part of the world, and such a spot of his vineyard, and bringing you to such a sermon, or under such a ministry. O how innumerable are his precious thoughts! And what think ye of him?

5. What think ye of his *words*, as well as his thoughts? Surely, if you think duly, you will think them sweet words; *How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth*, Psalm cxix. 103. Does the Spirit never take some of his words, and put a spiritual majesty thereupon? Though many times, like Samuel, you mistake the Lord's voice, believer, and think it is Eli that speaks, and cannot discern the voice of Christ from the voice of Moses; the voice of grace from the voice of the law; yet, when the Spirit comes, and whispers in a word from Christ sometimes, what think ye of it? *It is the voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh, skipping upon the mountains, and leaping upon the hills!*—What think ye of his *inviting* words, saying, *Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden?*—What think ye of his *expostulating* words, saying, *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?*—What think ye of his *intreating* words, and his *promising* words, his *I will's*, and *ye shall's*; *I will be your God, and ye shall be my people?* Do you think so much of them, that your hearts say AMEN to them?—What think ye of his *may be's?* Believers will think right much of a *may-be* from him sometimes. *It* MAY BE *he will be gracious; It* MAY BE *ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*—What think ye of his *shall be's?* There are *shall be's* for the church in general: *Upon all the glory there* SHALL BE *a defence: In the mount of the Lord it* SHALL BE *seen:* What think ye of these? There are *shall be's* for yourself in particular: There is a *shall be* for your protection; *A man* SHALL BE *a hiding-place from the storm. This man* SHALL BE *the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land.* There is a *shall be* for your provision; *Bread* SHALL BE *given thee, and thy water* SHALL BE *sure.* There is a *shall be* for your instruction; *They* SHALL BE *all taught of God.* There is a *shall be* for your justification; *His name* SHALL BE *called,*

led, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. There is a *ſhall be* for your ſalvation from ſin and wrath; *His name* SHALL BE *called* JESUS, *becauſe he ſaves his people from their ſins; even Jeſus, which delivers from the wrath to come.* There is a *ſhall be* for a happy death; *Death* SHALL BE *ſwallowed up in victory.* There is a *ſhall be* for a happy welcome at the day of judgment; *They* SHALL BE *mine, in the day that I make up my jewels.* There is a *ſhall be* for a happy eternity; *And ſo we* SHALL BE *ever with the Lord.* What think ye of all theſe words and *ſhall be's?* Is there any faith here, ſaying, AMEN; *ſo let it be; ſo ſhall it be?*—What think ye of his *verily's?* We cannot go through theſe, to tell you how oft he hath confirmed his words with a *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you:* Many a WRATHFUL *verily* againſt his enemies, that think nothing of him; many a LOVING *verily* towards his people, that think much of him. O Sirs, do you eſteem them all to be the truth, and that *verily* it is, and ſhall be as he hath ſaid?—What think ye of his *dying* words, as when he ſaid upon the croſs, *It is finiſhed?*—What thing ye of his *living* words; *I am he that was dead, and am alive, and behold I live for evermore?*——O! what think ye of his words? Cannot your heart ſay, *Lord, to whom ſhall I go? thou haſt the words of eternal life?* O what think ye of him?

6. What think ye of his *works?* even his works of creation; what think ye of theſe? For *by him all things were made that were made, and without him was nothing made*, John i. 3. O when you behold the *heavens, the works of his hands, the moon and the ſtars, which he hath ordained*, may you not ſay, *What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* ——What think ye of his works of *providence*? For *he upholds all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 3. If you wonder how he can raiſe your dead bodies at the great day, and ſever your duſt from other duſt; may you not as well wonder, how he every day riſes up in your view innumerable ſtalks of corn out of the duſt, and gives to every pickle of ſeed his own body? as the apoſtle argues, 1 Cor. xv. 35. and downward. How

will he raiſe the *believer's vile body*, out of the filthy duſt where it roots, and make it *like unto his own glorious body? O fools that we are, and ſlow of heart to believe*, how does he raiſe the beautiful lilies out of the dung? *Solomon, in all his glory, is not comparable to one of theſe*; and all the world cannot make one of them to riſe, without his powerful providence. Theſe miracles of providence are common every day in your view, and ſo we think nothing of them; but we might ſee the power of Chriſt in them. If you wonder how it was poſſible for Chriſt to turn the water into wine, or multiply a few loves, and a few fiſhes, ſo as to feed ſo many thouſands; we needed not wonder ſo much, if we but thought how his providence is doing that every year: the water falls from the clouds, and the vine by his order turns it unto wine; and by the ſpan of ſuch fiſhes, and the grain of ſuch loaves, he is feeding millions every day. Wo is us, that we cannot think of him, and his works as we ought!——Above all, what think ye of his works of *grace*, and *redeeming love?* All his other works are as the drop of a bucket, in compariſon of this ocean; for herein we may ſee him appear in his own, and his Father's pomp and ſplendor, manifeſting all the glorious perfections of God; even his infinite power, and wiſdom, holineſs, juſtice, mercy, truth, faithfulneſs, and all God's attributes. I might here mention his works of grace *for us* and his works of grace *in us*; but it were endleſs to ſpeak of the thouſandth part. —His work of grace *for us* lies in his *bringing in everlaſting righteouſneſs*, eſpecially if we ſpeak of his good works; ſurely it is a good work, that can fulfil the holy precepts of that good law which we have broken, and can anſwer the righteous threatening of the juſt law which we have incurred. Well, here is the doing and dying of the Son of God, for both theſe ends, that divine holineſs may be vindicated, and juſtice ſatisfied, in the way and manner of our ſalvation through him. The *law of God* is a *perfect law*, and *exceeding broad*; but here is a righteouſneſs as broad as it can be, ſo as to *magnify the law and make it honourable.* O! what think ye of that good work?—His work of grace *in us*

is

is also much to be thought of; and that lies mainly, I think, in imputing his perfect righteousness to us for our justification, (which is indeed properly an act of grace upon us, Rom. iii. 22.) and implanting another righteousness beside it for our sanctification, which he carries on to perfection. This internal work of grace may be begun with sighs and groans, advanced in battles and conflicts; but it will be completed in victory and glory. ——Well, then, in this short glance of his works, what think ye of them! May ye not say, as Psalm cxi. 3. *His work is honourable and glorious, and his righteousness endures for ever?* And when you notice his works, what think you of himself?

7. What think ye of his *gospel*, and the *terms* of it? that gospel, which we preach in his name, wherein his *righteousness is revealed from faith to faith?* If you think highly of him, you will think highly of it, as the best news, and most glad tidings that ever you heard; *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that preach the gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things, that publisheth salvation!* Isa. lv. 7. Rom. x. 15. Some are ready to think the gospel of grace, and salvation through Christ, is too good news to be true with respect to them, as if it were not to be supposed that God will bestow so great salvation so freely upon so great sinners; not considering, that God in the gospel aims not at our glory chiefly, but at the declaration of his own glory, and the magnifying of his own free grace; and that therefore we ought to take freely what he gives freely. It is a manifestation of free grace, sovereign grace, which is neither hindered by our evil, nor furthered by our good, Rom. iii. 24.; and regards neither our worthiness to deserve it, nor our unworthiness to impede it, Rom. ix. 15. Hence Luther alledged, that "mens "minds were so occupied with fantastical imaginations "of their own works, that the glad tidings of the gos- "pel will seem strange matters to them." Men will be astonished at the greatness of his grace, as it is, Jer. xxxiii. 9. Many think of the gospel, as if it were a *new law*, wherein God stands upon some easier terms with us than in the covenant of works; thus confounding law

and

and goſpel, and making a hotch-potch of both. Indeed, if we ſpeak of law-terms, upon which our ſalvation ſtands, they are no eaſier than ever they were: a perfect righteouſneſs is the only condition of ſalvation; and we not having that in ourſelves, the goſpel offers it in Chriſt, and there is the ground of our eternal ſalvation: but if we ſpeak of the goſpel-terms, we need not ſay, you muſt come up to them; but rather, *Come down, Zaccheus; for this day is ſalvation come to thy houſe:* ſalvation is come to you, and offered freely to you, *Without money, and without price;* come down and take it. And indeed faith, which belongs to the order and method of God's applying the goſpel, is a coming down from all our legal hopes of ſalvation for ſomething to be done by us, in order to our being obliged to another, even to Chriſt for all, Iſa. lv. 1, 2. Rev. xxii. 17. Come down from the ſycomore-tree of your vain hopes, and get all freely: that is the goſpel. What think ye of it? This is indeed a hard ſaying to proud fleſh and blood, which thinks rather they ſhould go up, and do more for their juſtification and ſalvation, than come down, and be obliged to another to pay all their law-debt completely. He will do all for you, or nothing: and, O man, what think ye of him and his goſpel? But then,

8. What think ye of his *ſervice*, and his *wages?* When a man is once brought in to the goſpel-terms, and underſtands them, then, and not till then, does he come up to the goſpel-rule; for, *Faith works by love*, and love is the fulfilling of the law as a rule, from thankfulneſs to him that hath delivered from the law as a covenant. If you think his ſervice hard and uneaſy, it ſeems you are not thinking much of Chriſt, but rather of the law, which is a heavy yoke, that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear: but Chriſt's *yoke is eaſy, and his burden is light*, Mat. xi. 29, 30. becauſe in this ſervice the man hath no law-debt to pay, for Chriſt hath done that to his hand, but only a love-debt; *If you love me, keep my commandments:* and thus, *his commandments are not grievous.* Here grace is all and all, both of the ſervice and wages. Grace ſays, "Up and be doing, "man, in my ſtrength; for the greateſt work is done

"to

" to your hand, and now my grace ſhall be ſufficient " for thee." Grace ſays alſo, " Behold a crown of " glory, a reward of grace awaiting you, after you have " fought the good fight of faith; therefore have an eye " to this recompence of reward." Death is the proper wages of ſin, and it is a juſt debt; but grace's wages is free; *The gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord;* that is, there is here no promiſe of life upon our doing, but a promiſe of grace to do, and of glory to crown our doing, and of both grace and glory as the reward of Chriſt's doing all; and therefore, what think ye of him and his ſervice?

9. What think ye of his *livery?* If you would anſwer this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* I would aſk, what wear ye of Chriſt? The raiment of his righteouſneſs, and the garment of his grace, ſo as to be all glorious within and without, like the king's daughter, will be precious to you. If you be clothed with the ſcarlet robe of his blood and righteouſneſs, by which you are perfectly righteous before God, then, to be ſure, you will think it very indecent for you to be clothed with naſty apparel before men. If a poor maid be married to a rich king, and yet go abroad like a beggar in filthy rags, would not every body cry, It is a ſhame for her, that, having ſuch a huſband, ſhe ſhould diſcredit him and herſelf? If you be married to Chriſt, and think much of your huſband and his righteouſneſs, ſurely you will think it becoming to wear his livery, and not go abroad with unclean mouths and filthy hands, like the reſt of the world, to the diſhonour of your Lord.

10. What think ye of his *love*, and the *reaſons* of it? Who can underſtand the height, and breadth, and depth, and length of his love? It is without all dimenſion. And why does he love any of the loſt poſterity of Adam? He tells us the reaſon, Deut. vii. 7, 8. *He loved you, becauſe he loved you.* Do you think he loves you for your beauty, O black and ugly ſinner! Nay, he profers his love and kindneſs upon you in the goſpel freely, not for your own beauty's ſake, but for his own name's ſake: and his grace, love, and good-will, as revealed in the goſpel, is to be believed with applicati-

on

on to yourſelf, for no other reaſon but becauſe it is his will and pleaſure. His love muſt make you beautiful, but cannot find you ſo. And if you cannot believe his grace and good-will to you, becauſe you have no beauty, you are but rejecting the reaſon of his love, deſpiſing the freedom of his grace, and ſtanding upon the terms of the old covenant of works, ſlighting the grace of the new covenant. This is ſuch a diſeaſe to mankind, that even believers in Chriſt, when they are helped to perform duty, with any lively frame, they are ready to ſay, with Leah, Jacob's wife, when ſhe brought forth ſeveral children to him, *Now my huſband will love me, becauſe of my fruitfulneſs;* ſo ſays the believer, when he is helped to bring forth fruit unto God, and finds his Spirit revived in duty, his ſoul ſtrengthened, his heart enlarged, and a great deal of comfort there, *O now,* ſays he, *my Huſband will love me becauſe of my fruitfulneſs.* But what comes of it? the perſon having ſuch a legal ſett, the Lord, to correct it, takes away all fruitfulneſs out of his view, in a manner, and leaves him barren; "O ſays the believer then, where is my for-"mer ſweet hearing, and ſweet praying and praiſing, "and ſweet meditation?" Why, the Lord has cut off theſe, that he may cut off your legal pride of being loved for your beauty and fruitfulneſs, and that you may *return to your firſt Huſband, for then it was better with you than now.* You muſt begin, believer, where you began at firſt, and think of his loving you merely becauſe he loves you. They that build their conjugal comfort only, or mainly, upon their righteouſneſs of ſanctification, and ſo ſecretly incline to follow after the law, will find their ſouls very unſettled, even up and down with their changeable frame. But again,

11. I may aſk, what think ye of his *lovelineſs?* O! is he *white* and *ruddy* in your view? O! ſee how the ſpouſe deſcribes him, Song v. 10. and downward, in the beauty of his head, his locks, his eyes, and all and every part of him; his belly, or bowels of mercy: *His mouth is moſt ſweet,* ſays ſhe. O the words, the ſmiles, the kiſſes of his mouth, his kindly embraces! I have read of one Agatho, that was a man ſo holy, that with

a kiſs

a kiſs he cured one of his leproſy; whether that be true or falſe, yet what I intend by telling it, is true, that ſuch is the virtue of Chriſt, that a kiſs of his mouth, a ſmile of his countenance, will cure the ſoul of ſpiritual leproſy; yea, a word of his mouth will do it: *Now are you clean through the word that I have ſpoken*, John xv. 3. Again,

12. What think ye of his *favour* and his *bleſſing*? Surely if you eſteem him duly, you will think *his favour is life, and his loving-kindneſs better than life*, and that *his bleſſing only makes rich*. Eſpecially, what think ye of his bleſſings and benefits that cannot be enjoyed by feeling, but by faith; nor by the ſight of ſenſe, but by the ſight of faith? *We walk by faith, and not by ſight*, ſays the apoſtle. But it is the fault even of believers, that they can hardly believe they have any more than they feel; and hence, when they are in the darkneſs of deſertion, they think they have nothing; they have loſt his favour, becauſe they do not feel it; they have loſt his righteouſneſs, becauſe they do not feel it: but remember, that when Aſaph ſaid, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* he added, *This was my infirmity*. You know, in a houſe where it is dark, all things are there that were before, though you ſee them not; ſo it is with you, believer, though you be in darkneſs, all things are as they were before: do you think all is gone, becauſe you cannot ſee it? Well, you never walk by faith, but by feeling; nay, *He that walks in darkneſs, and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God*. The name of the Lord is to the fore; his God is to the fore; the object of his faith is to the fore, as much as ever; and *the juſt ſhall live by faith*. Will you not believe the ſun is in the firmament where it was, becauſe a cloud hath come and intercepted the light of its beams? "Why, ſays one, but my miſery is, when I am in the "dark night, I fear it was all but deluſion that ever I "met with, and that there was nothing real or ſaving "in it." This I find is a common thought among ſerious ſouls; but all that I ſhall ſay to it, is by enlarging

the ſimilitude; aſk a man when it is dark night, how do you know that ever you ſaw the natural ſun? it may be you was but dreaming, and deluding yourſelf; it was nothing but a ſtrong imagination. Why, ſays the man, I am ſure I ſaw it, becauſe my eyes were dazzled with the light of it, and I was warmed with the heat of it, and I ſaw to work by it; and by the light of it I ſaw every thing about me. So may you ſay, believer; when a dark night of deſertion or temptation comes on, the tempter ſuggeſts, *It may be all was but a deluſion.* Why, man, were not your eyes enlightened? was not your heart warmed? did you not ſee to work, and went on in your work joyfully, *the joy of the Lord being your ſtrength?* and did you not ſee every thing about you? You ſaw God in his glory; you ſaw ſin in its vileneſs; you ſaw holineſs in its beauty; you ſaw the world in its vanity; you ſaw the creature in its emptineſs; Chriſt in his fulneſs; you ſaw yourſelf in your lothſomneſs: but now, when the light is withdrawn, *What think ye of Chriſt?* Is there no ſun becauſe it is ſet to your view? Do you think it never ſhone upon you, becauſe it is not now ſhining? What think ye of an abſent Chriſt? do you think nothing of him becauſe he is abſent? Surely, believer, that is not thought like a believer: ſenſe is many times denied you, that you may learn to believe more than you do.

"But, ſay you, when he is not preſent with me, I "cannot believe." I ſhall tell you my mind here. There is a *powerful* preſence neceſſary to believing: but there is a *ſenſible* preſence that is not neceſſary to it, but rather uſually comes upon the back of faith. Now, that powerful preſence of God, that is neceſſary to believing, does open up the object of faith, namely, Chriſt's righteouſneſs, God's promiſe, the truth of God, the blood of Chriſt; power is ſometimes inſenſibly exerted, not by an outward open violence upon the man, but by an inward, ſecret, and ſweet inchantment, as it were: ere he is aware, and before ever he knows that it is divine power that is doing the work, he finds the object of faith, that he is thinking upon, making room for itſelf in his heart, and drawing out his ſoul, as it were, inſenſibly

ſenſibly to it: and thereupon comes in ſenſible preſence upon the back of that; *After ye believed, ye were ſealed*, Eph. i. 13. Now, if you ſay, you cannot believe without his powerful preſence, that is true; divine power muſt be exerted to every act of faith, but then this power does ordinarily put forth itſelf inſenſibly and unawares, while we are thinking on, or viewing the object of faith; *While I was muſing, the fire burned*, Pſal. xxxix. 3. The Spirit of God clears the object of faith, that being viewed and applied, the heart is ſet on fire with it; there is his powerful preſence uſhering in the ſenſible preſence. But if you ſay, You cannot believe till you have his ſenſible preſence; that is to make ſenſe the foundation of your faith, and not the word of God, or the Chriſt of God: therefore, in order to believe, let not your queſtion be firſt, What find you in yourſelf? but rather, *What think ye of Chriſt?* You will find none of the ſweet effects of faith, till you think on Chriſt the object of it. Again,

13. What think ye of his *inviſible glories? Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen.* Faith ſees not the things that are ſeen and felt; ſenſible enjoyments, for example, are not the object of faith, but ſenſe: but faith ſees the things that can neither be ſeen nor felt; it believes contrary to ſenſe; yea, things impoſſible to nature, and incredible to carnal reaſon, conſidering only the power of God, that ſpeaks in the word, as you ſee in the faith of Abraham. The greateſt glory of Chriſt is inviſible and incredible to nature; therefore we do not think much of him, if our faith does not terminate on things not ſeen. Again,

14. What think ye of his *tabernacles* and *ordinances?* Surely, if you think much of Chriſt, his tabernacles will be *amiable* to you. The ſlighter of his ordinances, is a ſlighter of Chriſt; a ſlighter of prayer, is a ſlighter of Chriſt; a ſlighter of the word, is a ſlighter of Chriſt: *He that deſpiſes you, deſpiſes me; and he that deſpiſes me, deſpiſes him that ſent me.* Again,

15. What think ye of his *cauſe* and *intereſt*, ſuch as the much forgotten Reformation-work in Scotland, which our forefathers eſtabliſhed by ſolemn National

Covenants? If, the more it is forgotten among ministers and people, the more nearly it lies to your heart, and the more you long for its reviving, it were an evidence you think something of Christ, when others think little of him. But, alas! How little is this thought of in the age we live in! If the generation thought more of Christ, there would be more zeal for his interest, honour, and public Reformation-work. And, perhaps, the confusions of our day, the heavy bondage we are complaining of through the land, will never cease to grow to a height of terrible wrath, till we be brought to a sense of our defection, and a humble confession and reformation. Further,

16. What think ye of his *cross* and *crown?* Is his cross your crown? Surely they think much of Christ, that can say with Paul, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Moses thought his cross better than a crown, *esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.* They that think much of Christ, must resolve upon it, that the world will not think much of them, but that they will be crossed, reproached, and nicknamed; but if Christ was nicknamed for us, and *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*, we may well bear a reproach for him, especially when he hath said, *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth on you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified;* his cross makes way for his crown, and in the mean time his sweetness swallows up all the bitterness thereof.

17. What think ye of his *friends?* If you think highly of him, surely his friends and followers will be esteemed as *the excellent ones of the earth, in whom is all your delight;* and consequently his foes will be disesteemed by you: and therefore,

18. What think ye of his *enemies?* Though they were appearing in never so much worldly pomp, you will think very little of them, if you know them to be his enemies: *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; to their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.* — What think ye of his enemies *within* you? When you find

these

these like *thorns in the flesh*, like splinters run into the flesh, does it not make you, with Paul, *to beseech the Lord thrice*; yea, to pray thrice, and thrice, and a hundred times thrice, with sighs and groans, to be freed from them?—What think ye of his enemies *about* you? I mean, the world, and the lusts thereof; *the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life.* I have read a pretty story, which I reckon useful no other way than for the moral of it, how an angel and an hermit should have been travelling together: when first they went by a dead carcase, the hermit stopt his nose, and the angel smiled; and, after that, they went by a wanton strumpet proudly dressed, at which the hermit smiled, and the angel stopt his nose. The moral shews us, that in the sight of God and angels, no carrion is so noisom as pride is. But the more highly that any think of Christ, surely the more humble they are; and pride will accordingly be hid from their eyes. Again,

19. What think ye of the *world's thoughts* of Christ? If you think highly of him yourself, you will be mightily surprized, and look upon it as a great wonder why the world think so little of him. O strange! that all the world are not taken up with him!

20. What think ye of your *own thoughts* of him? Surely, if you think duly of him, you will think you have but very poor, mean, low, contemptible, and unworthy thoughts of him; you will think that you cannot think enough of him, *who is fairer than the sons of men; the Prince of the kings of the earth; altogether lovely.*—— These are some probationary questions, by which you may take your own hearts to task before the Lord.

But I cannot stand to enlarge these things; and I must own the thousandth part is not said that might be spoken from this text; for, as the whole scripture does *testify of Christ*, either directly or indirectly; so I might go through all the scriptures, and ask what ye think of Christ, in a suitableness to what is said of him, in this or that place of scripture.

Fourthly, This doctrine might again be applied by way of *lamentation* over all Christ-despisers, who either stand

ſtand upon a legal bottom, truſting in themſelves, and their own righteouſneſs; or who ſlight Chriſt and his ordinances, not loving the place where his honour dwells; who delay and poſtpone their cloſing with him, giving away the prime and virginity of their affections to the world, proſtituting their precious ſouls to their luſts and the ignoble things of time; who ſit down ſatisfied and content without Chriſt, never miſs him, nor feel a want of him, nor ſeek after union and communion with him. Oh! whence is it that you deſpiſe Chriſt at this rate! Alas! it is through ignorance and unbelief, that you *ſee no form nor comelineſs in Chriſt, why he ſhould be deſired;* and the *god of this world hath blinded your minds who believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine into them.* Do you conſider what a miſerable caſe you are in, while you deſpiſe and think ſo little of Chriſt? — You are in imminent danger of *temporal* judgments; for God, in his holy providence, may reſent the injuries done to his Son; he may *leave your houſe deſolate.*—You are expoſed to *ſpiritual* judgments, ſuch as that, Iſa. vi. 10. of having your *heart made fat*, you *ears heavy*, and your *eyes ſhut;* and to *eternal* wrath, even everlaſting deſtruction from his preſence: *He that believes not ſhall be damned.* Now,

Fiſtly, Let me offer a word of *exhortation.* O Sirs, ſeek that the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt may be ſent, that, beholding his glory, your thoughts concerning Chriſt may be changed; and you may be brought to eſteem him, and to go home with the *Roſe of Sharon* in your boſom; Chriſt in your hear. O ſinner, will you tell me, do you think it worth your while to take Chriſt, and embrace him before you go? If you ſay you cannot believe, you cannot repent, you cannot mourn for ſin, you cannot pray, you cannot obey; and ſo, becauſe you have no grace, no ſtrength to do any thing, you are diſcouraged: I muſt tell you, ſinner, when you conceive religion to be ſome great difficulty above your power, and thereupon are diſcouraged and damped, you do not think of Chriſt

as

as you ought, but of yourſelf, forſooth, as if you were the fountain from whence theſe good things ſhould flow. The law may and does diſcourage ſinners; yea, curſes every Chriſtleſs ſinner unto hell; but the goſpel offers no diſcouragement to ſinners, but all encouragement. Perhaps you will find us that are miniſters, ſometimes going off from our moſt goſpel-texts that we can chooſe; and when we explain faith, we will tell you how many things it includes; ſuch as, the forſaking of all ſin, and the performing of all duty, and ſtudying univerſal holineſs: but whatever be the fruits of faith, which the Lord makes to grew out of it, yet faith itſelf is a great myſtery; and whatever you hear us ſay, that leads you off from this queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?* ſuſpect it. I will tell you, in the Lord's name, that to believe imports no more than to take Chriſt for all; it is to think you have nothing, and can do nothing; but that he hath all, and can do all; and therefore you will take him for all.—You think you cannot *believe:* well ſaid, but, *What think ye of Chriſt?* If you think to bring faith out of your own bowels, you think unworthily of Chriſt, who is the *author of faith*; and of his Father, who is the giver of it.—You think you cannot *repent:* true; but, *What think ye of Chriſt?* If you think to bring repentance out of yourſelves, you think unworthily of him, who is *exalted by the right-hand of God, to give repentance.*—You think you cannot do this, or that *duty* you are called to; but, *What think ye of Chriſt?* If you ſit poring on yourſelf, and your own abilities, never a good turn will you do: nay, you think unworthily of Chriſt, who hath ſaid, *Without me ye can do nothing*, but by me ſtrengthening you, ye can do all things. You are diſcouraged, becauſe you think you have not this thing in yourſelf, or that thing in yourſelf: but that is unbelief, man; for, faith lies in thinking, what am I in Chriſt? Iſa. xlv. 24. *Surely ſhall one ſay,* [and they ſhall not only ſay it with their mouth verbally, but think it in their heart believingly] *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* And becauſe, by the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word is confirmed, there are three *in the Lords* in that one chapter, ver. 17.

Iſrael

Iſrael ſhall be ſaved IN THE LORD, *with an everlaſting ſalvation*; ver. 25. IN THE LORD *ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory*; and in this 24th ver. IN THE LORD *have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* And if you be once brought to this believing thought, *In the Lord have I righteouſneſs; in the Lord have I ſtrength*; in the Lord I have ſalvation; in the Lord I have all; then you will find your work eaſy, and all going right.

Now, you that cannot be brought to think much of Chriſt: O pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of your heart may be forgiven you! and whereas you think nothing of him now, O conſider what you will think of him in a day of challenges, when conſcience awakens! in a day of deſolation, Iſa. x. in the day of death, in the day of judgment! What will you think of him, when you ſee him mounting the tribunal, and when pronouncing the fearful ſentence, *Depart from me ye curſed?* Surely you muſt have dreadful thoughts of him then, if you cannot be brought to think highly of him now; now, when he is not come to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave. But you, believer, that now think highly of him, whatever great thoughts you have of Chriſt now, yet what will you think of him in that day, when *he who is your life ſhall appear*, and *ye ſhall appear with him in glory?* O believer, what will ye think of him, when he pronounces the ſentence of abſolution, *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you?* O! what will ye think of his palace, his attendants, his throne, crown, and glory?

Sixthly, I would offer an *advice* to you that think much of Chriſt, and have a high eſteem of him.

1ſt, That you would evidence your hearty *eſteem* of him; and that,

1. By the *degrees* of it; ſo as to eſteem him above all things elſe, above all your relations: *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me*, Matt. x. 37. Our love to them muſt be hatred, when it comes to compete with Chriſt; *If any man come after me, and hate not father and mother, he is not worthy of me.*

me. Above all worldly advantages; yea, above life; Rev. xxi. 11. *They loved not their lives to the death;* their pangs of love were ſtronger than the pangs of death.

2. By the *effects* of it; ſuch as,

(1.) Deſire of *converſe:* if you think much of Chriſt, you will deſire his company in all ordinances; you will ſeek him in the temple, you will ſeek him in the cloſet; in every ordinance, public or private, you will earneſtly ſeek and deſire him.

(2.) Entertaining no *rival* that comes in competition with him, but ſaying, *What have I to do any more with idols?* giving chearfully up with all other lords and lovers.

(3.) *Sympathy;* grieving at theſe things that are grievous to him.

(4.) Preſerving his *memory*, living upon him: like the woman that drank the powder of her dead huſband's body, mingled with her daily drink; ſo ſhould ye, by faith, daily eat the fleſh, and drink the blood of the Son of God.

2*dly*, A *ſecond* advice is, that you would do all that you can, to make *others think as much of him as you do;* and that,

1. By *commending* him, and telling others of his beauty, that they may admire him. See the practice of the ſpouſe for this, Song v.; and what influence it had upon the daughters of Jeruſalem their beginning to think much of him, and ſeek after him alſo, Song vi. 1. O then, commend him to your families, your children, and your neighbours.

2. By *adorning the goſpel*, and *walking worthy of him*, and *wearing his livery.* It is a maſter's honour and credit to have a good ſervant, and well arrayed; they think much of the maſter that hath ſuch a ſervant. And how does it proclaim the praiſes of Chriſt, when they that profeſs him are eminent for piety, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

3. In a word, *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing your good works, may glorify God*, and think much of Chriſt. O let your hearts be ſtill thinking of him, your life praiſing, and your tongue ſpeaking of him!

him! Here is a fountain for ſpiritual diſcourſe: if you have an opportunity of converſing with any, concerning the great ſolemnity you have been witneſſes to here; or if any aſk you, Where was ſuch or ſuch a miniſter's text? here is a fair occaſion for ſpiritual converſe; for, you cannot, in a manner tell them this text, without aſking them a queſtion, *What think ye of Chriſt?*

SERMON LII, LIII.*

The GRADUAL CONQUEST; or, *Heaven won by little and little.*

DEUT. vii. 22.

And the Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee, by little and little.

YOU that have been right communicants at this occasion, you have been upon the field of battle, fighting in the name and strength of the Lord against your spiritual enemies; what victory you have got, I cannot tell: but some may, perhaps, be saying, Oh! I find my enemies to be yet strong and mighty; *Iniquities prevail against me;* and, I fear, I never get to the full possession of the heavenly Canaan, there are so many and strong nations of enemies in the way, which I cannot get conquered. To such as may be thus exercised, the words of my text may be welcome news, *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee, by little and little.* We have here God's promise to Israel of old, concerning their being brought to the possession of the earthly Canaan, which you know was a type of the heavenly Canaan; and, lest they should be discouraged by the difficulty of the conquest, so many enemies being in the way, he animates them against the greatest discouragement. 1. If they objected the *number* of their enemies, and their strength; he answers that objection, ver. 17, 18. He had destroyed greater enemies than these for them; and he that had done the greater,

* This subject was discussed in two sermons, preached at the sacramental solemnity at Carnock, July 3d, 1727. It has undergone six impressions.

would eaſily do the leſs; he that began the work, would finiſh it. 2. If they objected the *weakneſs* of their own ſtrength and forces; he anſwers that objection, ver. 20, 21. Their greateſt encouragement was, that they had God among them, a mighty God, and terrible; and if God be with us, if God be for us, we need not fear the power of any creature againſt us. 3. If they objected the *ſlow progreſs* of their arms, and feared that the Canaanites would never be ſubdued, if they were not expelled at the firſt; to this it is anſwered in the words of our text, *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations, by little and little.* Where you may notice two things.

1*ſt*, Iſrael's *enemies* deſcribed; they are called *nations*, becauſe of their multitude and power.

2*dly*, Iſrael's *conqueſt*; *The Lord thy God will put them out before thee, by little and little.* Where you may notice both the glorious Conqueror, and the manner of the conqueſt.

1. The *Conqueror* is God, deſcribed by his ſovereignty over them, *the Lord*; and by his propriety in them, *thy God.* He it is that fights their battles.

2. The *manner* of the conqueſt: he will do it, 1. *Effectually*; He *will* put them out. 2. *Remarkably*; He will put them out *before thee.* 3. *Gradually*, which is the ſpecial thing here noticed in the manner of the conqueſt, namely, *by little and little.* The ſame you read, Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. The wiſdom of God is to be remarked in the gradual conqueſt of his people's enemies; and it is in real kindneſs to the church, that her enemies are ſubdued by little and little.

Now, Iſrael, being typical of the church; and the land of Canaan typical of heaven; and Iſrael's conqueſt over the nations, their enemies, typical of the ſpiritual conqueſt of the Lord's people over their ſpiritual enemies; and the manner of God's dealing with them for the moſt part, typical of the way of God's dealing with his people in all ages: therefore I would deliver to you the goſpel of this text, and open it in this one doctrinal obſervation;

DOCT. *That as the true Iſrael of God have nations of enemies in their way to the poſſeſſion of the heavenly Canaan;*

Canaan; so the Lord their God will conquer these nations, by little and little.

I shall endeavour to open and confirm this doctrine in the following method.

I. Enquire who are the *true Israel* of God.
II. Speak a little of the *heavenly Canaan*, which they will be brought to the possession of.
III. Enquire what *nations of enemies* they have in their way.
IV. Speak a little of the *Conqueror*, the *Lord their God.*
V. The *manner* of the conquest, his putting them out before them by *little and little.*
VI. The *reasons* of this gradual conquest.
VII. Make *application* of the whole, in several uses.

And in all these, I shall endeavour as much brevity as possible. Mean time, look to the Lord, that he would give some word with power, and with a blessing.

I. The *first* thing, Who are the *true Israel* of God, to whom this promise is made in the mystical and spiritual sense of it? *They are not all Israel that are of Israel.*

1. The true Israel of God, whom he will bring to the heavenly Canaan, are a people whom he hath *set apart for himself*, and *separated from the rest of the world*, as Israel was. The true Israel are set apart, not only by election, from eternity; but by effectual calling, in time. As, in the first creation, God separated the *light* from the *darkness*, and made the one *day*, and the other *night*; so, in effectual calling, he separates the elect from others, as light from darkness: he leaves the rest of the world buried in their own obscurity, and makes the others children of light. By effectual calling, they get convincing grace, others are left stupid and seared; they get enlightening grace, and others are left in the dark; they get renewing grace, and others are left in their enmity; they get persuading and enabling grace to believe, others are left in their unbelief, and remain *children of disobedience* and unpersuadableness: *This peo-*

ple

ple have I formed for myſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe. Hence,

2. The true Iſrael of God are a people whom he hath *brought out of Egypt*, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as Iſrael was in a temporal; and that with a *high hand*, and *outſtretched arm*. He hath brought them out of the Egypt of a natural ſtate, and out of the houſe of bondage; from their natural bondage to ſin and Satan, their bondage to the law, as a covenant of works, putting them to the hard taſk and intolerable labour of *doing for life;* a taſk much worſe than the Egyptian bondage, of making *brick without ſtraw:* he hath brought them, I ſay, out of the *houſe of bondage* with a high hand: no power in the world being able to looſe their bonds, if the power of a God had not been put forth for that end. They are a people redeemed, not only by the price of the Mediator's blood, but alſo by the power of his Spirit: by his power he hath begun to plague their enemies, and to drown them in the Red-ſea of his blood; for, they *overcome by the blood of the Lamb.*

3. The true Iſrael of God are a people acquaint with *travelling in the wilderneſs*, from Sinai to Zion, as Iſrael was; I mean, from the law to the goſpel; from the covenant of works to the covenant of grace. As Iſrael at Sinai was amazed at the ſight of God appearing in his terrible majeſty, and afterwards were brought into covenant with him; ſo the true Iſrael of God are a people that have been humbled with the views of God's holineſs and infinite juſtice in the command and threatening of the law; and been made to *flee for refuge to the hope ſet before them*, in the goſpel-covenant: they have come from Sinai to Zion; *to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling.*

4. The true Iſrael of God are a people acquaint with the *conduct of the pillar of cloud and of fire*, as Iſrael was; I mean, they have gotten the Spirit of Chriſt to be their guide in the way to Canaan: *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his;* and if any man have the Spirit of Chriſt, he is guided thereby, and *led into all truth*, and out of all the paths of damnable error. There is a leading of the Spirit by a ſecret inviſible hand,

and

and by the means of the word, that all the Iſrael of God are partakers of; even a voice behind them, ſaying, *This is the way*, and that is not the way; and all *his ſheep know his voice.*

5. The true Iſrael of God are a people *fed with manna from heaven*, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as Iſrael was in another ſenſe: they are a people that eat the *hidden manna*; that *have bread to eat the world knows not of*; even *the bread of life that came down from heaven*: they live by faith on the Son of God; Chriſt is the ALPHA and OMEGA of their life; the food and medicine of their life; the reſtorer and preſerver of their life: they cannot live without him. The worldling lives upon his riches, the carnal man lives upon his luſts, hypocrites live upon their profeſſion, legaliſts live upon their duties; but the true Iſrael of God live, in the way of duty upon Chriſt himſelf, as their *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification*, and *redemption*. If I have any wiſdom, Chriſt is my wiſdom; if any righteouſneſs, Chriſt is my righteouſneſs; if any holineſs, Chriſt is my ſanctification: Chriſt is my ALL; my life, my ſtrength, my treaſure, my hope, my deliverer, my friend, my Saviour, my complete ſalvation.

6. The true Iſrael of God are a people acquaint with *wreſtling with God for the bleſſing*, as Jacob was, who thereupon obtained the name of ISRAEL; and all believers are thereupon called the *ſeed of Jacob*, that ſhall *not ſeek his face in vain*. They are a people, whoſe life of faith is acted much upon their knees; or in a way of praying in the name of Chriſt, and in the Spirit of Chriſt; *Praying in the Holy Ghoſt: This is the generation of them that ſeek thee; that ſeek thy face, O Jacob's God.* They are always wanters, and that makes them conſtantly ſeekers and beggars.

II. The *ſecond* thing was, to ſpeak a little of the *heavenly Canaan*, that they will be brought to the poſſeſſion of. I would hold it forth in theſe four particulars, namely, in its *types*, *epithets*, *parts*, and *properties*.

1ſt, In its *types*. The types of the heavenly Canaan were many. I ſhall name a few of them.

1. The *earthly* Canaan was a type of the *heavenly*

and

and *celeſtial* Canaan. How magnificently does the Lord ſpeak of Canaan? It is called *a goodly land; a holy land; a land flowing with milk and honey:* yet this land was but a type and ſhadow of the heavenly.

2. *Paradiſe* was a type of this heavenly Canaan. Though all the pleaſant orchards, and comely things in the world were unite in one, they could not come that length as to compete with the earthly paradiſe for pleaſure and comelineſs, when God placed our firſt parents there in their innocent ſtate: yet, what was it but a faint reſemblance of the heavenly paradiſe? nothing but a ſhadow of it.

3. The *Sabbath* was a type of this heavenly, happy, and eternal Sabbath of reſt. Indeed it is unſettled reſt the Lord's people have here; when they reſt in the Lord at any time, their reſt is ſoon diſturbed: even though they can ſay at times, *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee;* how ſoon does the devil, the ill heart, and the world diſquiet them again? But *there remains a reſt,* [a SABBATISM,] *for the people of God,* when *they ſhall reſt from their labour;* reſt from ſin and ſorrow.

4. The *tabernacle* was a type of the heavenly Canaan: the *Lord's preſence filled the tabernacle.* O how does his glorious preſence fill heaven, and fill all the hearts of the heavenly inhabitants! glorious things are ſpoken of the earthly Zion: how much more glorious things may be ſpoken of the new Jeruſalem above! But then,

2*dly*, We may conſider the heavenly Canaan in its *epiteths;* as,

1. It is called a *houſe*, John xiv. 2. A *manſion-houſe, a prepared place. In my Father's houſe are many manſions; I go to prepare a place for you.* O what a noble houſe is it, where glory dwells! What an excellent houſe will it be, when the Father of the family will be in the midſt of the houſe, and all his children about him; all his elect gathered together from all the corners of the earth; where the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Chriſt himſelf, the elder Brother, and all the younger brethren will dwell together!

2. It is called the *joy of the Lord: Enter thou into the*

Joy

joy of thy Lord. Joy here enters into the believer; but there the believer enters into joy: he enters, as it were, into an ocean of joy; and it is the joy of his Lord Jesus. How great is the joy that our Lord entered into, as the reward of his obedience unto death? of which it is said, Heb. xii. 2. that, *For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right-hand of the throne of God.* That same joy the saints are to enter into; *In thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right-hand, there are pleasures for evermore.*

3. It is called *life, eternal life;* Rom. vi. 23. *The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Life is sweet; and the more excellent the life is, the more sweet. A living fly is more happy, by reason of life, than the glorious sun in the firmament. The rational life is yet more sweet; the life of grace is yet sweeter than any of these: but the life of glory is sweetest of all; and this life is eternal; it is life for evermore.

4. It is called a *kingdom,* a *heavenly kingdom;* 2 Tim. iv. 18. *The Lord shall preserve me to his heavenly kingdom.* Yea, such a kingdom, that all the subjects here are kings. One said of Rome once, that it was *Respublica regum;* "A commonwealth of kings:" it is true of heaven, it is a commonwealth of kings; they are all *kings and priests unto their God.* And there all the kings have their *crowns;* a crown of glory, righteousness, and joy. They will have their *thrones; To him that overcomes, will I give to sit with me on my throne,* &c. They will have their *royal robes;* their *robes of glory, and palms of victory.* But again,

3*dly*, We may consider this heavenly Canaan in its *parts.* There are especially these four parts of heaven and glory mentioned in scripture, namely, *vision, likeness, love, satisfaction.*

The *first* part of it is the *vision* of God; 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Father, I will, that these whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory.* Now cabinets of rich treasure will be opened up to them every moment to eternity.

2. The *ſecond* part of it is *likeneſs*, which follows upon the former; *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. This is the native fruit of beholding Chriſt, to be thereby brought to conformity to him, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

3. The *third* part of it is *love*: this follows upon the former. Likeneſs breeds love, even upon earth: then will the ſaints be made *perfect in love*, 1 John iv. 18. O what flames of love will burn in heaven! Every ſaint will be a flame.

4. The *fourth* part of it is *ſatisfaction*, which proceeds from the reſt; Pſalm xvii. 15. *I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs; when I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.*—All this is begun on earth in the heirs of glory. The brighter view a believer gets of Chriſt, the more likeneſs; the more likeneſs, the more love; and the more love, the more ſatisfaction. But, O when there ſhall be perfect ſeeing, there will be perfect likeneſs; when perfect likeneſs, perfect love; and when perfect love, perfect ſatisfaction and joy: then *the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come unto Zion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads: they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away*, Iſa. xxxv. 10.

4thly, We might conſider this heavenly Canaan in its *properties*. It is another ſort of inheritance than the earthly Canaan.

1. It is a *glorious* inheritance: it is glory itſelf; yea, an *exceeding great and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. God, who is every-where preſent, is there glorioufly. To make a weak alluſion: The ſun in the firmament, is in this or that place, by his rays and beams; but in the firmament, in a glorious manner: ſo God is here on earth, in his grace, and the rays of his countenance; but in heaven, in a glorious way. O Sirs, there the ſaints are, indeed, *all glorious within*, and without both; their bodies glorious, *like unto Chriſt's glorious body*, when once they are raiſed; their ſouls glorious, becauſe *perfect in holineſs*.

2. It is an *heavenly* inheritance; therefore called *a heavenly kingdom*, as I ſaid, in oppoſition to earthly king-

kingdoms. There the great King is heavenly, the ſubjects are heavenly, the work is heavenly, the reward heavenly, the company heavenly, the converſe heavenly, all heavenly.

3. It is a *purchaſed* and *promiſed* inheritance; called a *purchaſed poſſeſſion*, Eph. i. 14. The crown is purchaſed, the throne purchaſed, the robes purchaſed, and all purchaſed by the blood of the Lamb; which makes them ſing that melodious ſong, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain.* And as it is purchaſed, ſo it is *promiſed in Chriſt before the world began*, 2 Tim. i. 9. and Titus i. 2. The earthly Canaan was a promiſed land; they had it by promiſe made to Abraham firſt, and in him to them: ſo is heaven promiſed to Chriſt, and in him to all the ſpiritual Iſrael.

4. It is an *eternal* inheritance; 1 Pet. i. 4. *An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* The earthly Canaan was but temporary, ſubject to be laid deſolate for the ſins of the inhabitants thereof; and accordingly it was laid waſte, and remains ſo to this day: but the heavenly Canaan is an inheritance that is not liable to corruption nor defilement, and therefore it fades not away. It cannot, like the former, be infeſted with enemies or ill neighbours, nor with any plague or malady: *The inhabitants of that land ſhall not ſay, I am ſick.* It is a place of perfect health, without any ſickneſs; and a happy immortality, without any death, or fear of death: a bleſt eternity; for, when thouſands, thouſands, thouſands of years are gone, their happineſs is but beginning. Earthly kingdoms fade, and this world's monarchs die; but, in that everlaſting kingdom, *death is ſwallowed up in victory.* If it were to have an end after millions of years, it were enough to make them live in perplexity and trouble; but it is eternal and everlaſting.——There is a ſhort deſcription, from the word, of that heavenly Canaan.

III. The *third* thing is, to ſhow what *nations of enemies and oppoſitions* are in the way to this heavenly Zion. See how many and mighty nations ſtood in the way of Iſrael's poſſeſſing the earthly Canaan, verſe firſt

of this chapter where our text lies: *Seven nations greater and mightier than they.* And after they came to that land of promiſe, ſome of theſe nations were ſuffered to dwell among them, particularly the Jebuſites, that were prickles in their eyes, and thorns in their ſides. And, in proceſs of time, God ſtirred up other nations againſt them, for juſt and holy cauſes; as the Philiſtines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, that coaſted near their dwelling; beſides the Aſſyrians and Babylonians from remoter countries, that led them captive. And, beſides outward enemies and foreign invaſions, they were not a little vexed and diſquieted with civil and inteſtine diſſentions: there was Saul's houſe againſt David's, and David's againſt Saul; Iſrael againſt Judah, and Judah againſt Iſrael; Manaſſes againſt Ephraim, and Ephraim againſt Manaſſes: nations thus both without and within, and enemies on every ſide. Now, in like manner, there are great and mighty nations that oppoſe the true Iſrael of God in their way to the heavenly Canaan above, and that hinder their peaceable poſſeſſion of any part of heaven that, through grace, they poſſeſs on earth. In alluſion, therefore, to the ſeven nations here, that God caſt out before Iſrael of old; I ſhall ſhow ſeven of theſe nations of ſpiritual enemies and oppoſitions that are in the way to the heavenly Canaan, and that diſturb the Iſrael of God in any begun poſſeſſion that they may have here, through grace.

I only premiſe, that as, in an outward ſenſe, all nations of the earth proceed from one root and original, namely, the firſt man Adam; ſo, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, moſt part of all the nations that oppoſe our happineſs do ſpring from one root; and the grand root is original ſin and natural corruption: here is the great commander, that leads forth multitudes of nations of actual oppoſitions againſt God, and the Iſrael of God that are bound for the heavenly Canaan. *A body of ſin and death* is the fertile womb that brings forth ſwarms in one day; yea, there, as it were, *whole nations are born at once.* But more particularly, there are theſe *ſeven nations* that oppoſe and vex the Iſrael of God in their way to Canaan.

1. A nation of *vain thoughts.* We are by nature *vain*

in

in our imaginations, Rom. i. 21.: and these vain thoughts lodge within the walls of Jerusalem; *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. iv. 14. These nations lodge within, take bed and board with you, and eat up the very sap of your souls; therefore, when David says, Psal. cxix. 113. *I hate vain thoughts*, he expresses them with a word that signifies the *sprig* and *branch* that grows in a tree, which draws the sap out of it, and makes it fruitless. Do you not find a nation of this sort swarming about your heart every day, and every hour of the day? Yea, I am mistaken if these Philistines have not been upon you, and if these nations have not been besetting you, and besieging your souls in time of hearing, praying, communicating at this occasion; and, I imagine, they who are exercised and bound for heaven, will find a need of almighty power to put out this nation before them, though there were no more. And, indeed, these vain thoughts are like the flying posts to the rest of the nations that may be named. But then,

2. There is a nation of *worldly cares*, which Christ compares to *briars* and *thorns*, that *choke the seed of the word*, Mark iv. 9. and Luke viii. 14. This nation goes under the name of *Frugality;* but, if you look narrowly to its armour, you will find the motto thereof to be *Careful about many things, but neglecting the one thing necessary:* and yet this is such a powerful nation, that many people are subdued by it, so as they can do nothing but mind earthly things, and so lose heaven, and come short of salvation; yea, such is the power of this nation even over the Israel of God, that he is obliged, in a manner, to smite them, and extirpate the world out of their heart with a rod of correction; *For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him*, Isa. lvii. 17.: yea, the rod of God will not do it, till the grace of God efficaciously be exerted; *I hid me, and was wroth; and yet he went on frowardly in the way of his heart:* but sovereign powerful grace steps in; *I have seen his ways, and will heal him.*

3. There is a nation of *doubts* and *fears*, and *sinful discouragements*, and *unbelieving objections*, Psal. xlii. 6, 7.

The

The ſoul is overſet and overwhelmed oft-times with them. They may well be compared unto a nation; they are ſo many, that no ſooner does a miniſter begin to anſwer objections, but the unbelieving heart will raiſe a thouſand more; and ſo mighty, that there is no ſubduing of them, till Chriſt himſelf rebuke them, as he did the raging waves of the ſea, with a word of power, and ſo create a calm in the ſoul. This is a nation that *rages*, like the *heathen* ſpoken of, Pſal. ii. and *imagines* many *vain things againſt the Lord, and his Anointed;* but the Lord ſtills the rage with the *rod of his ſtrength*, that he *ſends out of Zion*, when he *makes a people willing in the day of his power*. He anſwers the doubts and objections of unbelief, and ſtills the fears and diſcouragements of his people, either by a word of power let into the heart, ſuch as that, *Fear not, it is I; be not afraid: O thou of little faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt?* Or by a breathing of his Spirit, accompanying a word that is ſpoken to the ear.

4. There is a nation of *ungodly men* from without, that alſo vex and oppoſe the Iſrael of God in their way to the heavenly Canaan; *Judge me, O God, and plead my cauſe againſt an ungodly nation*, Pſalm xliii. 1. This is a nation that many times ſuppreſs and bears down the work of God in the ſoul. The company and influence of the ungodly, that mock at religion, and laugh at ſacred things, is a great let and impediment to the ſalvation of a ſoul. And as it was with Iſrael of old, ſo it is with the church in all ages; ſhe is never without enemies that annoy her: there are four ſorts of ungodly men, that the church of God generally complain of; the *tyrant*, the *atheiſt*, the *heretic*, and the *hypocrite*: ſome of theſe would ſubvert, and others pervert her. The *tyrant*, by heart-hatred and open perſecution; the *atheiſt*, by profanity of life; the *heretic*, by corruption of doctrine; and the *hypocrite*, by pretences of holineſs. Theſe nations of ungodly men do oppoſe the Iſrael of God, partly by force, and partly by fraud: and, indeed, the ſecret enemies are uſually the moſt dangerous of the two; they that uſe fraud, more dangerous than theſe that uſe force: for theſe, being ſeen and known,

are

are more eaſily avoided; but the other not ſo eaſily ſhunned, becauſe not ſuſpected.

5. There is a nation of *mighty kings*, and *powerful giants*, as the ſons of Anak are called, Num. xiii. 33. How many great kings did the Lord give unto the hand of Iſrael? ſuch as, Og, king of Baſhan; Sihon, king of the Amorites, Pſal. cxxxvi. 18, 19, 20. Pſal. cxxxv. 10, 11. But there are greater kings and potentates than theſe, that ſtand in the way of the poſſeſſion of the heavenly Canaan. There are more eſpecially, four kings, mighty kings, to be ſubdued: for,

(1.) As *ſin* is a mighty king, that reins in us, and over us naturally; therefore ſays the apoſtle, Rom. vi. 12. *Let not ſin reign in your mortal body:* ſo,

(2.) *Satan* is a mighty king in his own territories; therefore called the *prince of this world;* the *prince of the power of the air, that rules in the hearts of the children of diſobedience*, Eph. ii. 2.

(3.) *Self* is a mighty king; it competes with king Jeſus, and keeps his throne, ſo long as the *loftineſs of man is not brought down*, and the *haughtineſs of man made low*, Iſa. ii. 11. that the *Lord alone may be exalted* in the heart: and, even after Chriſt is exalted to the throne of the heart, Self is ſtill fighting and working for the throne. It is a king that all the world adores.

(4.) *Death* is a mighty king; therefore called the *king of terrors*, Job xviii. 14. He is a king, that is the terror of kings, as well as inferior ſubjects. This is called the *laſt enemy* of God's Iſrael; *The laſt enemy to be deſtroyed is death:* and happy they that get the *ſting of death* removed, which is *ſin*. See 1 Cor. xv. 54,—57. *Death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory.* Chriſt is the victorious conqueror of this and all other enemies: however, theſe are mighty kings in the way; and ſome of them have mighty giants in their armies, particularly theſe three, *viz.* king *Sin*, king *Satan*, and king *Self*; theſe three have powerful armies to fight their helliſh battles. And there are,

6. A nation of *deceitful luſts* in the heart; ſo called, Eph. iv. 22. Theſe are like ſo many deputies and officers, captains, and lieutenants, fighting under the banner

ner of king *Sin*, king *Self*, and king *Satan*, againſt king JESUS, the God of glory. O what ſwarms of luſts make up this army of hell! If you will travel through the camp of your heart, you will ſee an armed regiment of gigantic luſts: there you may ſee *grim-faced ignorance*, armed with the devil's black livery: there you may ſee *curſed atheiſm* and *unbelief*, armed with lies and blaſphemies, and bitter invectives againſt heaven: there you will ſee *cruel enmity*, armed with a bloody ſword of forcible oppoſition unto God and Chriſt: there you will ſee *ſubtile hypocriſy*, armed with fraud, and flattery: there you will ſee *brazen-faced hardneſs of heart*, armed with a brow of braſs: there you may ſee *dultiſh ſecurity*, armed with a fearleſs ſpirit, and a ſtupid conſcience; *bold preſumption*, armed with a daring countenance; *towering pride*, armed with a robe of gaudy attire, and an eye of ſcorn, contempt, and diſdain; as alſo *ſelf-righteous confidence*, armed with groſs ignorance both of the ſpirituality of the law, and myſtery of the goſpel. There is a powerful nation of heart-plagues and deceitful luſts, that reign over the ungodly world, and many times rage in the hearts of unbelievers to the leading of them captive.

7. There is a nation of *actual out-breakings* in the life, and *ſins* in the converſation: theſe are, like the common ſoldiers of the army of hell, making daily excurſions into the camp of Iſrael; yea, every hour of the day they are breaking out on this hand, and on that hand, and round about us on all hands, in innumerable omiſſions and commiſſions. Here breaks out *intemperance* and *inſobriety*, in eating, drinking, and uſing of the comforts of life; there breaks out *idle words*, *vain talking*, *unprofitable converſation*: here appears *negligence* in duty, and *careleſneſs* and *indifferency* in hearing, reading, praying, communicating; and there appears *miſpending* of time, Sabbath and week days both, waſting our precious opportunities, and miſ-improving our talents, without endeavouring to do good or get good, to glorify God, or edify theſe that are converſant with us. The former nation I mentioned was the *luſts of the fleſh*, and this nation is the *works of the fleſh*: the luſts

of

of the flesh are deceitfully hidden within the walls; the works of the flesh are open and manifest, making continual outward excursions. You may have a list of them, Gal. v. 19,—21. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings.* Another list of the names of the soldiers of this army you may read, 2 Tim. iii. 1,—5. *Men shall be lovers of themselves:* there goes the king and commander in chief, SELF-LOVE; and then follows a list of the common soldiers, *Covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures,* &c.

Now, these are the seven nations continually in arms, and at work for hell, and against heaven: the nation of *vain thoughts* continually flying post through the rest of the nations for intelligence; the nation of *worldly cares*, continually making *provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;* the nation of *doubts*, and *unbelieving fears*, and *jealousies*, is still keeping watch, and standing centry at the door of the heart, to keep out all heavenly messages, and exclude all proposals of peace with heaven; the nation of *ungodly men* continually guarding the out-works of hell, and plying their large artillery and battering rams, to beat down what God, and Christ, and the gospel would build up; the nation of *mighty kings*, that I mentioned, are still issuing forth new commands and orders for war against heaven; the nation of *deceitful lusts*, like officers of the army, are still mustering the host, leading them forth to the field of battle, and setting them in battle-array; and the nation of *actual sins* and *out-breakings*, are still brandishing their swords and spears, and other impliments of war, making daily and hourly excursions out of the camp of hell, and incursions upon their opposites and antagonist; running upon the camp of Israel, to destroy them, and hinder their march to the heavenly Canaan.

Now, to these seven nations all the world of mankind are, by nature, kept in subjection; [redacted] which is worse, they are willing slaves and captives to them: and even

the Iſrael of God, that have left their camp, and fled under the colours and ſtandard of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Captain of ſalvation, are many times led captive to them: they are ſtill giving battle to Iſrael.—Now, O thou that art bound for the celeſtial Canaan, what think-eſt thou of theſe nations? Are they not ſeven nations greater and mightier than thou? Surely, if thou haſt found, to thy ſad experience, the power, and the policy, and the pernicious influence of theſe mighty nations upon thee, it will be welcome news to hear that *the Lord thy God will put out theſe nations from before thee, by little and little.*

IV. The *fourth* thing that I propoſed, was, to ſpeak a little of the *Conqueror* of theſe nations; that is, *The King of glory; the Lord, ſtrong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle.* Indeed, they that have ſuch mighty nations to fight and debate with, have need of a mighty conqueror to ſubdue them: and he is here ſaid to be *the Lord thy God;* where he is deſcribed, 1. By his name, JEHOVAH. 2. By his relation to them in Chriſt, THY GOD.

1*ſt*, Iſrael's Captain, that fights their battles, is deſcribed by his great name JEHOVAH, *the* LORD, in capital letters; which is ordinarily uſed in all our Engliſh tranſlations, to intimate, that in the original it is JEHOVAH: and it is a name that points out the perfection of his nature. It is remarked, that all along the firſt chapter of Geneſis, while God was yet upon his creating work, he is called ELOCHIM, *a God of power;* but in the ſecond chapter of Geneſis, ver. 4. God having compleated his work, he is then called JEHOVAH-ELOCHIM, *a God of power, and perfection.* And as he here takes that name, when he perfects what he had begun; ſo we find him making himſelf known by this name, when he appears to perform what he had promiſed to Iſrael, Exod. vi. 3. *I appeared to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, by the name of* GOD ALMIGHTY; *but by my name* JEHOVAH *was I not made known to them.* God would now be known by his name JEHOVAH, as being, 1. A God *performing* what he had promiſed, and

ſo

ſo giving a being to his promiſes. 2. A God *perfecting* what he had begun, and finiſhing his own work. And now, the ſubduing of the Canaanites before Iſrael, was a work that God had promiſed, and a work that now he had begun; therefore, he makes himſelf known in this work by his name JEHOVAH, a *performing* and *perfecting* God. This is the powerful Conqueror, that all the true Iſrael of God have to look to, and depend upon, for deſtroying the nations of ſpiritual enemies for them. This name belongs to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, equally with the Father and the eternal Spirit. It is he that led Iſrael out of Egypt by the hand of Moſes, wrought wonders for them, and brought them to Canaan, and delivered their enemies into their hand; by all which was typified the greater ſalvation and deliverance that he was to work, in accompliſhing the buſineſs of our redemption in our nature. And by taking to himſelf the name JESUS, he hath not loſt the name JEHOVAH; nay, he could not be a JESUS, if he were not JEHOVAH: he could not deſtroy theſe nations I have named, the ſum of which is *ſin;* for to deſtroy ſin, is more than to make a world: ſin cannot be deſtroyed, without ſatisfying that infinite juſtice that ſin offended, and glorifying that infinite holineſs that ſin affronted, and fulfilling the law that ſin had violated, and appeaſing the wrath and vengeance that ſin had kindled. Further, ſin could not be deſtroyed, without deſtroying the devil that begat it, and the wicked heart that brought it forth; all which requires a new creation, more great and glorious than the firſt, and belongs to none but JEHOVAH. This name points out the divine glory of our Redeemer and Conqueror, which I offer in theſe two further remarks upon it.

1. This great name JEHOVAH, (as theſe that inveſtigate the Hebrew root, obſerve) ſignifies *being*, *eſſence*, *ſimple-exiſtence*, or *ſelf-ſubſiſtence;* and imports his moſt *ſimple*, *abſolute*, *eternal*, and *independent being*, and *exiſtence;* having his being in, of, and from himſelf; and from whoſe infinite being, all creatures have their finite being.

2. This name JEHOVAH comprehends in itſelf the

three Hebrew tenſes; the *preterit*, ſignifying the *time paſt*; the *preſent*, ſignifying what *is now*; and the *future*, ſignifying the *time to come*: and imports that deſignation given to Chriſt, Rev. i. 4, 8. *Which is, and which was, and which is to come.* Thus he is the I AM THAT I AM, as he is called, Exod. iii. 14. The ALPHA and OMEGA, the *Firſt* and the *Laſt*: the firſt, without beginning; and the laſt, without end. O but they who have ſuch a glorious General to follow, need not fear to take the field againſt the nations! He is JEHOVAH.

2*dly*, Iſrael's Captain-general is here deſcribed by his relation to them, THY *God; the Lord* THY *God.* This relation is ſtated upon the ground of a new-covenant diſpenſation, even a covenant of promiſe in Chriſt Jeſus. Of this covenant there was an Old-Teſtament diſpenſation, under which this people of Iſrael were; and a New-Teſtament diſpenſation, under which we are: the former was a darker, and this is a clearer and brighter diſpenſation of the ſame new covenant. The old covenant of works being broken and violated by the ſin of man, God could not, in honour, come under this relation again to ſinners, but upon the ground of a new covenant, eſtabliſhed in Chriſt.—This covenant of promiſe was firſt diſcovered to Adam in paradiſe, afterwards to Abraham, and others. The promiſe of that new covenant was ſealed by the blood of Chriſt *typically*, under the Old-Teſtament, by the ſacrifices then offered; and *actually* at Jeruſalem, when he *gave his life a ranſom for many.* Upon the footing of this covenant, I ſay, it is, that he aſſerts this relation, *The Lord* THY *God.* But more particularly, for explaining this relative deſignation, THY God; we may take a fourfold view thereof.

1. As it is expreſſive of the *antient* federal relation betwixt God and Iſrael of old, the church of the Jews under that diſpenſation. He became their God, and they were choſen of him to be his peculiar people, beyond all other people in the world; as you ſee, Deut. vii. 6. *For thou art a holy people to the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath choſen thee to be a ſpecial people to himſelf, above all people on the face of the earth.* He made

made known his mind with reſpect to the way of ſalvation to them, and they to others; *He ſhewed his word unto Jacob, and his ſtatutes and judgments to Iſrael; he hath not dealt ſo with any nation,* Pſalm cxlvii. 19, 20. And having taken them viſibly into a covenant-relation, he eſtabliſhes his covenant with them and their ſeed; *The Lord hath delight in thy fathers to love them, and he choſe their ſeed after them,* Deut. x. 15. And thus he ſaid to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7. *I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, to be a God to thee and thy ſeed.* Hence ſays God to them, *You only have I known of all the families of the earth.* All this is ſaid of them, even with reſpect to their church-ſtate, abſtract from the ſingular ſaving privileges of true believers among them, who, through grace, were enabled to improve theſe great advantages they enjoyed above other people. By virtue of this relation that he ſtood in to them, he engaged, as the Lord their God, to put out the nations of the Canaanites before them *by little and little.*

2. You may view it as expreſſive of the *preſent* federal relation that God ſtands in to the viſible church under the New-Teſtament, even to us the Gentiles, as ſucceeding to the Jews in their church-privileges, together with ſuperadded advantages, in ſo far as the New-Teſtament diſpenſation does excel that of the Old. As it was ſaid to the Jewiſh church, *The promiſe is to you and to your children,* Acts ii. 39.; and that *to them belong the adoption, and the glory, the covenant, and the promiſe,* Rom. ix. 4.: ſo, in like manner, do they belong to the Chriſtian church, we being *grafted in among them, to partake of the root and fatneſs of their olive-tree,* Rom. ix. 17. Hence flows a common intereſt that all the members of the viſible church have in God, as their God; and Chriſt, as their Head: not only as a head of eminency, but as an head of influence and government. All the common influences ſhed among the members of the viſible church come from this ſource; and from thence reſult alſo many excellent privileges, all which are ſealed in baptiſm, which ſucceeds to the ſeal of circumciſion among the Jews. Baptiſm ſeals to us, and

to

to all the visible church, a common general right to God's covenant, so as we may warrantably plead the promises, and that promise in particular, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people;* which is the fundamental promise. Great are the privileges that belong to the visible church, which do not belong to these that are without: God commits to them his ministry, his oracles, and ordinances; by the means of which, he brings forth children, and gathers his elect; so as out of the church "visible there is no ordinary possibility of "salvation," Acts ii. 47. As all the baptized members of the visible church have a sealed interest in the covenant of promise, such as lays them under a special obligation to believe in Christ; so they have a claim, beyond the rest of the world, to God as their God in Christ, and as their Saviour: yea, all the church visible are said to be *in Christ*, John xv. 2.; even these branches that bear not fruit, and that shall be taken away, and cast into the fire. Baptism seals our ingraftment into Christ; that is, an ingraftment common to all that are members of the visible church, besides the saving spiritual ingraftment of true believers. Now, that common relation that you all have to God, as church-members, though it be common to believers and unbelievers; yet it is, in itself, a special privilege, whereby you are exalted above the rest of the world that are without the church; and gives every one of you a right to plead this promise to be accomplished to you in a spiritual sense, *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before you, by little and little*, even such nations of spiritual enemies as were typified by the Canaanites that Israel had to deal with. But then,

3. You may view this relative designation, *Thy God*, as expressive of the *special* relation he stands in to the church invisible, militant here upon earth; I mean, to true believers, the living members of Christ, and true Israel of God, whom he makes so, by becoming their God, in a way of sovereign free grace, in and through Jesus Christ, in whom they have a peculiar interest in God as their God, and a special title to, all the promises of the new covenant as their charter; all the promises

miſes being *Yea* and *Amen* in Chriſt Jeſus. Now, it is in this ſenſe eſpecially that I conſider this deſignation, *The Lord thy God;* becauſe it is the ſpiritual intent of the text that I treat, namely, as it does typify and repreſent the ſpiritual deliverance of the true Iſrael of God from their ſpiritual enemies, in order to the poſſeſſion of the heavenly Canaan; yet not excluding the great appearances the Lord makes for his church viſible on earth, collectively conſidered. And here it is proper you obſerve, that though this title, *The Lord thy God*, be oftentimes in ſcripture ſpoken of with reſpect to a viſible church, a mixt people of good and bad; as when he ſays to Iſrael, *I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and houſe of bondage;* and whereas in many inſtances it is ſpoken collectively of the whole body of the church: yet this rule is to be noticed, that where the Lord is mentioned in relation thus to a mixt people, all the privileges that flow from ſuch a relation of God to that people, are but common privileges; I mean, common to all that viſible church. Thus the privilege of bringing out of the land of Egypt, was a common privilege, common to all that people, good and bad among them; and ſo was this privilege of cutting off the nations of the Canaanites before them in a literal ſenſe, and poſſeſſing them of the earthly Canaan: and, therefore, though God be called the God of a church or people collectively, which infers many excellent privileges, though common to them all, as was ſhewed above; yet, he is not their God, in the ſame reſpect, as he is the God of the believer, or of the true Iſrael. As they *are not all Iſrael that are of Iſrael*, (for the whole viſible church, God's profeſſing people, are of Iſrael; but only true believers are Iſraelites indeed, and Jews inwardly, the true ſpiritual circumciſion;) ſo theſe true Iſraelites have a courſe by common, having a ſpecial and peculiar propriety in God as their God; which infers ſpecial and peculiar privileges. And hence,

4. You may view this deſignation, *Thy God*, as expreſſive of all the *bleſſings* that are imported in this ſpecial relation that he ſtands in to this true Iſrael. And, indeed,

indeed, the privileges imported thus in the word, *Thy God*, are innumerable and unſpeakable. His being their God, imports, that they have an intereſt in all that he is, and all that he hath, and all that he can do, and is wont to do for theſe whoſe God he is. Here is a field that would take a long eternity to travel through: *Happy is the people whoſe God is the Lord.* All happineſs in time, and for ever, is imported in it: his being their God, imports all the relations that he can be in to them, for making them holy and happy for ever in himſelf; that he is, and will be, their *Sun*, to enlighten them; their *Portion*, to enrich them; their *Father*, to pity them; their *Righteouſneſs*, to clothe them; their *Guide*, to conduct them; their *Glory*, to crown them; and their ALL *in all.* But the text confines me to theſe relations imported in this title, *Thy God*, which hath a reſpect to his deſtroying their enemies before them by little and little. I only mention two of theſe: 1. His being their God, imports, that he is their *Friend*, though their enemies be many. 2. His being their God, imports, that he is their *Shield*, though their enemies be mighty.

[1.] Amidſt the multitude of enemies, their God is their *Friend.* And, indeed, no matter who be our enemies, if God be our friend: *If God be for us*, ſays the apoſtle, *who can be againſt us?* Rom. viii. 31. And he is a friend to all theſe to whom he is a God in a peculiar manner. And his being their friend, imports, the removal of fewd and enmity; his anger being turned away, and reconciliation made up through Chriſt, whatever was the former difference. It imports the acceptation of their perſons into favour, and the obligation he lies under, as a friend, by virtue of the new covenant of grace and promiſe, to help them in every time of need; and to *do all their works in them and for them*; and to fight all the battles. Therefore,

[2.] Though their enemies be mighty, his being their God, imports, that he is their *Shield: The Lord God is a ſun and ſhield* to them, Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. The ſhields of the earth are his; and his being their ſhield, is to be underſtood both in a *defenſive* and *offenſive* way.

(1.) He is the Lord their God and ſhield to *defend* them;

them; *My defence is of God, which ſaves the upright in heart*, Pſal. vii. 10. Hence called a *ſtrong tower*, and *rock of defence*, a *hiding-place*, a *covert*, a *ſhadow*, to ſhelter them from the aſſaults and attacks of the nations of enemies that are within them, and round about them; *A man ſhall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempeſt; as rivers of waters in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land*, Iſa. xxxii. 2.

(2.) He is the Lord their God and ſhield, for *offending* all their enemies: hence he is ſaid to have a ſword of power girded on his thigh, for executing judgment on their enemies; Deut. xxxii. 41, 42. *If I whet my glittering ſword, and mine hand take hold of judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and a reward to them that hate me: I will make mine arrows drunk with blood.* Read alſo ver. 43. and compare it with Iſa. lxiii. 1,—4. *The day of vengeance is in mine heart, for the year of my redeemed is come.* O! it is a happy vengeance to the Iſrael of God, when he, as their mighty Conqueror, ſubdues the nations under them, and takes vengeance on all their powerful luſts and ſpiritual enemies. A day of vengeance to the enemy, is a day of redemption to his friends. But this leads me to

V. The *fifth* thing propoſed, namely, to ſpeak of the *manner* of the conqueſt. We have heard of the Conqueror, here deſigned, *The Lord thy God;* and now the manner of the conqueſt is, *He will put out theſe nations before thee, by little and little.* And here three things may be noticed with reference to the manner of the conqueſt, 1. It is obtained *powerfully* and *effectually;* He *will put out* theſe nations. 2. *Viſibly* and *remarkably;* He will put them out *before thee.* 3. *Gradually* and *piece-meal;* by *little and little.* To each of theſe I would ſpeak a word.

Firſt, The manner of the conqueſt is, that it is obtained *powerfully* and *effectually: The Lord thy God* WILL PUT OUT *theſe nations;* or, as it is rendered in the margin, *he will* PLUCK OFF *theſe nations.* And ſo it is further explained, ver. 23. of this chapter; he will *deliver them unto thee, and ſhall deſtroy them with a mighty de-*

ſtruction, till they be deſtroyed utterly. *And he will deliver their kings into thine hand,* ver. 24. And, Exod. xxiii. 30. *By little and little will I drive them out.* Now, thus, in the ſpiritual conqueſt, the nations muſt be put out: and the Lord's putting them out, does import,

1. That theſe nations of luſts, and ſpiritual enemies have *ſtrength* and *power* upon their ſide; ſo that it is no eaſy work to get them driven out; yea, utterly impoſſible, unleſs the Lord our God undertake it. If you aſk, where the ſtrength of theſe nations lies, and particularly the ſtrength of ſin? I anſwer in theſe four things.

(1.) The ſtrength of the nation of *ſin* and of *luſts* lies in their *root; viz.* the *body of ſin and death:* as the ſtrength of a tree lies in the root; ſo that the ax muſt be laid to the root, if you would deſtroy it; and as the ſtrength of the water is in the fountain, ſo that if you would deſtroy it, the fountain muſt be ſtopt up: ſo the ſtrength of ſin is in the root and fountain of ſin that is within. And hence,

(2.) The ſtrength of theſe nations of *luſts* lies in the relation they have to *ourſelves:* and hence, for a man to deſtroy his luſts, is to *deny himſelf.* Theſe nations of luſts and ſins are ſuch a part of himſelf, that they ſeem to be the beſt part, and the moſt uſeful part of himſelf; his right-hand, his right-eye, his members; *Mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth,* Col. iii. 5.

(3.) The ſtrength of theſe nations lies in the *commander* and *captain-general* that leads them forth; that is, the DEVIL; the great quarter-maſter that fills the heart, as it is ſaid of Ananias, Acts v. 3. *Why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lye to the Holy Ghoſt, and keep back part of the price?* It is the devil that fills the heart of people to lye, and fills their heart to ſwear, and fills their heart to drink and debauch, and fills their heart to keep back what ſervice is due to God. This commander is a ſtrong man, and cannot be conquered but by a ſtronger. Yea,

(4.) The ſtrength of theſe nations of ſin lies in the *law of works;* 1 Cor. xv. 56. *The ſtrength of ſin is the law.*

law. Sin hath dominion over all that are *under the law*, and not *under grace*, Rom. vi. 14. and that on many accounts, that I cannot now inſiſt upon; but particularly, among the reſt, becauſe, by reaſon of the original breach thereof, they are under the curſe of it, of which curſe the ſtrength of ſin is a great part; ſo that no leſs power than that which can pull up the root, a body of ſin and death, and pull down ſelf and all the members of it, and that can deſtroy the devil, the captain of hell, and, at the ſame time, give full ſatisfaction to the law of the God of heaven; no leſs power can deſtroy theſe nations, for here their ſtrength lies*.—The Lord's putting them out, ſuppoſes and imports this ſtrength and power that they have upon their ſide.

2. It imports, that theſe nations of luſts and ſpiritual enemies have the *poſſeſſion;* which, indeed, is alſo a great part of their ſtrength. There would be no need of driving them out, if they were not in: nay, they are in poſſeſſion; they are in actual poſſeſſion of the *underſtanding* of all men by nature, who are therefore *alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them.* They have actual poſſeſſion of the *will;* hence men are not only unwilling to let theſe nations go out, and as unwilling as Pharaoh was to let Iſrael go, though plagued from heaven for his wilfulneſs: but alſo the will is filled with *enmity againſt God*, and riſes up in arms and oppoſition againſt him, and in favours of theſe luſts. Yea, they have poſſeſſion of all the powers and faculties of the ſoul; they are deeply rooted in the heart and nature, as the Jebuſites were in the land of Canaan; and there they ſtrongly fortify and deeply intrench themſelves, ſo that it is no eaſy work to drive them out: yea, as they have no will to go out, ſo out they will never go, till they be driven by a ſuperior power, as Chriſt drove the buyers and ſellers out of the temple, who turned the temple of God to a den of thieves. Therefore,

* Wherein the *ſtrength of ſin* lies, is copiouſly opened up from theſe words, *The ſtrength of ſin is the law*, Vol. V. Serm. LXXIII. *&c.*

3. It imports, an *exerting of the divine power* in opposition to these nations, in order to their being put out and destroyed; and that is even the almighty power of God in Christ, by the Holy Ghost; *If you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live*, Rom. viii. 13. It is not by the power of nature, or free-will; *Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts*, Zech. iv. 6. When the conquest is actually commenced in a soul, the Spirit of God comes and gives battle to the nations of the Canaanites; the lusts and old inhabitants of the heart, and takes possession. How he does so, may afterwards more appear; only, I say here, the Lord's putting out the nations, imports, that his almighty power is actually put forth for this end.

4. It imports, that this power is and shall be *effectual*; for it is said, *He* WILL *put them out*: he will drive them out of their old quarters, and destroy them; he will drive them out of the heart, out of the house, out of the will, out of the affections, out of all the forts where they strengthened themselves, and at last out of the world, when he completes his work of sanctification; for, *He that hath begun the good work, will perfect it*, Phil. i. 6. And sure there is no true-hearted Israelite here, but will say, AMEN; Lord, hasten the time when these nations of lusts shall be driven out of my heart, and driven out of the world; Lord, let them be driven to hell with the devil, their captain, and let me be quit of them for ever. Well, the day of their complete extirpation is a coming; *The Lord thy God will drive out these nations*. But then,

Secondly, The manner of the conquest here expresst, is *visible* and *remarkable*; he will drive them out *before thee*. I think this word may import the visible and remarkable manner of the conquest: and more particularly,

1. That the Israel of God get a *sight* of their enemies. These nations are in their view, while the Lord their God is driving them out, and while they, thro' grace, are led to the field of battle against them: he will drive them out *before them*. They that never got a view of their sins and lusts, nor of the strength of their arms; that

that never ſaw their own corrupt nature, nor experienced the power of corruption in their hearts; they are yet living at their eaſe, in the midſt of theſe nations, and under the power thereof: they are *alive without the law*, Rom. vii. 9. The commandment hath not come, nor ſin revived, to diſcover its ſtrength to them: they are yet ſoldiers under the devil's banner: they have not taken on with Chriſt: the battle with the nations is not yet begun; for they never yet ſaw them, nor viewed and reconnoitered their ſtrength.

2. His driving out the nations before them, imports, that, through grace, the Iſrael of God are made *active* herein. It is *before thee* they ſhall be driven out. Being acted by his grace, they act; being armed by his Spirit, they fight; and, through the Spirit, *mortify the deeds of the body*. It is true, ſometimes the Iſrael of God have nothing ado at all, but juſt to ſtand ſtill, as it were, to ſee how the waters will divide to let them through, and how they will return to drown and overwhelm their enemies: but, for ordinary, their work is to *go forward*, in the name and ſtrength of the Lord their God, and give battle to their enemies, that they may be deſtroyed before them; and, under the banner of Chriſt Jeſus, the glorious Captain of ſalvation, to *fight the good fight of faith*. Yea,

3. His driving out the nations before them, imports, that, even when they are called to act and fight, they ſhall have no *ground of boaſting*, but rather of bluſhing, when they conſider what part it is they act in this matter: for the Lord himſelf muſt be the agent; *The Lord thy God will put out the nations before thee*. Iſrael's Captain goes before them, and leads the van; the Lion of the tribe of Judah muſt go before them, and tear their enemies to pieces: it is he that ſubdues the nations under them. He hath gone before them already, and had a bloody battle with all the nations of hell upon mount Calvery; there he fought, and *overcame principalities and powers*; there he *condemned ſin in the fleſh*, and *deſtroyed the ſtrength* of it, by *nailing the law to his croſs*, Col. ii. 14. And however the nations may rally their forces again, and ſeem formidable and dreadful, yet

their

their ſtrength being broken at this bloody engagement, the believer hath no more ado, in effect, but to hold up the red flag of the blood of Chriſt by faith, and then he *overcomes by the blood of the Lamb*, Rev. xii. 1. The great battle is already fought, and the great art of the believer, in all the leſſer battles and ſkirmiſhes, lies in ſetting his Captain before him, ſaying, *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord; for in the Lord only have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength;* viewing him as before them in the field, according to his promiſe, *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations before thee.*

4. It may import, that as the Lord their God will make their enemies to flee before their face, ſo they ſhall be *witneſſes* to the wonders of his power in overthrowing the nations in their way. The true Iſrael of God dare hardly call themſelves warriours againſt their enemies, but rather witneſſes to the battle of the Lord, when he fights for them, and makes them overcome, and then gives them the name of *conquerors;* yea, *more than conquerors, through him that loved them.* He overcomes for them, and then crowns them as the overcomers, ſaying, *To him that overcomes, will I give to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.* They are witneſſes to his grand atchievements and valiant exploits againſt their enemies; for, his ordinary time of fighting remarkably for them, is, when their *ſtrength is gone*, and when he *ſees their power is gone*, and there is *none ſhut up or left*, by reaſon of the power of their enemies, Deut. xxxii. 36.; then he ſteps in, and takes vengeance on their enemies. And, indeed, the day of power is a day remarkable for victories over ſin, Satan, the world, and the luſts thereof. Do you mind the day, believer, when you thought there was a legion of devils, a nation of luſts, an army of corruptions, a regiment of hell within you; but, behold, you got a view of the Captain of ſalvation ready to put out theſe nations before you; and you got grace to take hold of him, to believe in him, and ſo to *turn to flight the armies of the aliens?* Are there not ſome remarkable times, when you got your feet ſet upon the neck of your luſt? *By thee I have run through a troop,*

ſays

ſays David, Pſal. xviii. 29.; *and by my God I overleap a wall.* It is true, the conqueſt is not always remarkable; for ſometimes the nations *compaſs them about like bees*, and ſting them, and torment them, and prevail againſt them; *Iniquities prevail againſt me*, ſays David: yet they never prevail ſo far, but that grace ſtill renews the fight, and at laſt obtains the victory; though yet, through many ups and downs, fallings and riſings, and viciſſitudes and changes. Therefore,

Thirdly, The manner of the conqueſt here expreſt is *gradual*, by *little and little*. This is the main point here intended, with reference to the manner of the Lord's deſtroying the nations: Therefore I would here, 1. Show what may be *imported* in this his putting out the nations by *little and little*. 2. By what ſeveral *ſteps*, *ſtroaks*, or *degrees*, he puts out the nations in a ſpiritual ſenſe.

1*ſt*, As to the *import* of this phraſe, *by little and little*. It ſays,

1. That the Iſrael of God are not to expect that their ſpiritual enemies will be *all vanquiſhed at the firſt onſet*. Though the victory be begun, whenever the ſoul gets into Chriſt, and under his colours, who is the Captain of ſalvation; yet the commencement of the ſpiritual war is not the completement thereof; nay, there may be many a battle before the war be at a cloſe, and the victory complete: for, though the enemy hath got a dead ſtroak, and though the nations of luſts, like the beaſt mentioned, Dan. vii. 12. *have their dominion taken away; yet their lives are prolonged for a ſeaſon*; which occaſions the war to be prolonged. Alſo,

2. *By little and little*, it imports, that the viſible advantages over the nations of ſpiritual enemies may be *very ſmall*; Iſrael may be at a time but *holped with a little help*, Dan. xi. 34.; and get a *little reviving in their bondage*, Ezra ix. 8.; a little victory at a time; a ſmall advantage againſt the enemy: but though it be ſmall, yet the *day of ſmall things is not to be deſpiſed*, Zech. iv. 10.; for, as we ſay, Many ſmalls make a great. Therefore,

3. The Lord's putting them out *by little and little*, imports,

imports, that though the ſeveral foils be ſmall, yet they are *ſucceſsful*; for, by little and little, the nations are thus put out and diſcomfited: every new battle tends to the ruin of the enemy more and more. Let not the believer ſay that nothing is done, becauſe ſo little is done, and the enemy is yet alive. O be thankful, if, by *little and little*, the Lord be putting them out, and gradually diminiſhing their forces.

4. *By little and little*, it imports, the *continuation and progreſs of the war*, until there be a *total extirpation of the nations*. There may be an intermiſſion of ſtroaks, now a ſtroak and then a ſtroak given to the enemy; but no intermiſſion of the war during the militant ſtate; no ceſſation of arms; no proclamation of peace with the enemy; no league with any luſt among the true Iſrael of God. Luſts may, indeed, riſe and rage, and rally their forces again, even after they are routed, and a multitude of theſe nations may gather together; and the believer may be in great fears of the iſſue, leſt he be ſwallowed up and deſtroyed before them; till, by faith, he get a new recruit of auxiliaries and reinforcement of ſtrength from heaven, and then he will ſay, with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. cxviii. 10, 11. *The nations compaſt me about, but in the name of the Lord will I deſtroy them*; for then *the right-hand of the Lord does valiantly*. Yet ſtill it is by little and little; *here a little, and there a little*; here a little ſtroak given to Satan's kingdom, and there a little ſtroak; here a little daſh given to the old man and his luſts, and there a little daſh; a little at this duty, and a little at another; a little at this ſermon, and a little at another ſermon; a little at this ſacrament, and the other ſacrament, till the finiſhing ſtroak be given. But this leads to the other queſtion here,

2*dly*, By what *ſteps* and *degrees* is the conqueſt over the nations advanced to a total extirpation of them? Here I might enquire, 1. By what degrees the conqueſt is advanced by Iſrael's Captain in his *own perſon*? 2. By what degrees it is advanced by him in *their perſons*?

(1.) By what degrees the conqueſt is advanced and completed by the Captain of Iſrael, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, in his *own perſon?* I will tell you four remarkable periods of his conqueſt, wherein you may ſee four remarkable degrees thereof.

1. The *firſt* period was the *commencement* of the war in paradiſe, immediately after the fall of Adam: there he proclaimed war between the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent; and, after the proclamation, during that Old-Teſtament period, he kept all his ſoldiers in expectation of his appearing, according to that promiſe and proclamation, as their Head and General; ſo that, in the faith of this coming Meſſias, they overcame.

2. The *ſecond* period was in the remarkable *combat* that was betwixt the two heads of the two contending parties on mount Calvary, Chriſt on the one hand, and the ſerpent on the other; when, though the ſerpent bruiſed his heel unto blood, yet he brake the ſerpent's head with his bloody heel, while *by death he deſtroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;* and vanquiſhed the nations of hell, by deſtroying their commander's power.

3. The *third* period was in the *after-game* that followed upon this memorable combat; when, in his reſurrection and aſcenſion unto heaven, he diſmantled all the garriſons of Satan, *divided the ſpoil with the ſtrong, and led captivity captive:* which laid the foundation for a ſucceſsful war to his Iſrael, carried on between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels; where the dragon having got a deadly ſtroak, cannot prevail, Rev. xii. 7, 8.; though he continue thus to rally his forces againſt heaven, and all that bend heavenward to the end of the world. And then comes,

4. The *fourth* period, in that conſummate ſtroak which the Captain of ſalvation will give to the devil and his armies at the *great day*, when *he will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:* then death, and he that had the power of it, ſhall be utterly deſtroyed; for, *the laſt enemy to be deſtroyed is death*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. From the firſt to the laſt enemy, not one ſhall be ſpared from deſtruction: then ſin, and death that was brought in by ſin, ſhall be under an eternal baniſh-

ment, never more to appear among the Iſrael of God. — Thus you ſee by what ſteps and degrees the conqueſt is effectuated by the Lord Jeſus in his own perſon.

(2.) By what degrees, ſay you, is it actually obtained by him in *his members* and *ſoldiers*, when he drives out the nations before them? Why, 1. By little and little, he *brings them to the field of battle* againſt the nations, in a *day of power*, when the ſpiritual war is begun. 2. By little and little, he *carries on the conqueſt*, till the *day of death*, when the warfare is concluded.

[1.] I ſay, by little and little, he brings them forth to the field againſt the nations of luſts that ſtand in their way to the heavenly Canaan, and that in a *day of power*, in a *day of converſion*, when the ſpiritual war is commenced in the man's perſon.

QUEST. *How does the Lord their God bring them forth againſt the enemy?*

I do not limit the Lord to this or that way; he is Sovereign: but I ſpeak of the ordinary ſteps and degrees, by which he brings any poor ſinner that was under the power of ſin and Satan, mixed with, and under the power of the nations of hell; by which, I ſay, he brings them to the field. There are ſeveral fields that the Captain of ſalvation leads them through, before they be on the field of battle, where the nations are put out before them.

1. He leads them to the field of *conſideration*, and makes them there bethink themſelves what a ſad ſtate and condition they are in, while waging war againſt heaven, under the devil's banner. What am I doing? and, where am I going? and, what will be the end of theſe things, and of living in the ſervice of theſe nations of luſts? And, oh! where will be my landing-place to eternity, if this be my courſe? Many never go ſo far towards the heavenly Canaan, as to ſtep in to this field of conſideration: *The ox knoweth his owner, and the aſs his maſter's crib; but Iſrael doth not know, my people do not conſider*, Iſa. i. 3. But, ah! many never ſo much as turn their faces towards the field of battle againſt their luſts, ſo long as they do not enter on this field of conſideration: therefore, when the Lord begins a good work,

work on his people, he brings them firſt to conſider their ways; *I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet to thy teſtimonies.* May be he brings them to it by ſome rouzing providence, whereby he ſtops their career in wickedneſs, and *hedges up their way with thorns*, as he ſtopped Manaſſes, and held him in the thorns of Babylon, till he began to conſider and know that the Lord was God, and that he was fighting againſt God.

2. Another little advance, where by little and little he leads them forth to battle, is his bringing them next to the field of *concern:* this natively follows upon due conſideration. The man is brought to ſee the hazard and danger he is compaſſed with, and to be afraid of the iſſue. Some may make a ſtep into the field of *conſideration* a little, but they preſently ſtep back again, without going forward to the field of *concern:* but, when the Lord hath a mind to bring on forward to the camp for war, he brings them in to the field of *great concern*, where they are filled with a greater concern about ſalvation than ever they had about any thing in the world, ſaying with the jaylor, Oh! *what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* And with Peter's hearers, *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* Is there any ſalvation for me, that have been fighting againſt God all my days?

3. Another little advance, is, his bringing them from the field of *concern* to the field of *reſtleſneſs*, even to a reſtleſs endeavour to come out of Satan's camp, and out of that ſad condition they ſee themſelves into: for this concern about ſalvation, and fear of everlaſting damnation, makes them to fall about the means of relief; and ſo they read, and pray, and hear, and meditate, and mourn, and weep, and reform; and you would think they are by this time beginning to fight againſt the nations of their luſts: but, however theſe means be good in themſelves, and a reſtleſneſs in the uſe of them may be wrought under the awakening influence of the Spirit of God; yet there is ſome other field the man muſt be taken through, before he be capable to lift arms againſt his luſts in an evangelical and acceptable manner: for, as yet, his legal heart leads him to nothing but a legal warfare, under which his ſpiritual luſts remain ſtill

in their ſtrength and dominion. The man is yet under the law, and ſo under the *dominion of ſin*, Rom. vi. 14. And hence, while he is yet in this field, he is ready to be filled with vain imaginations, and legal dreams, like the young man in the goſpel, that it is by doing ſome good thing or other he is to have eternal life. In this caſe, he may be doing a great deal of duties, and doing what he can with the greateſt natural ſerioufneſs, and yet to no purpoſe; becauſe he is doing upon the principle of the old covenant of works, *Do and live.* Therefore,

4. Another little advance, is the Lord's bringing them from that field of *reſtleſneſs* to the field of *deſpair*; ſo as to deſpair of help in themſelves and in their endeavours; to deſpair of ever getting victory by their legal diligence; to deſpair of life by the law, and their own obedience thereto. When the ſoul is upon this field, it meets with the law, and ſees the extent and ſpirituality of it, as exacting no leſs than perfection; internal perfection, in heart and nature; external perfection, in lip and life; eternal perfection, in point of continuance and duration: for, *Curſed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* And ſo all this perfection it requires upon pain of eternal death and damnation. Now, the *commandment comes*, Rom. vii. 9.; and though the man was *alive without the law once*, and reckoned he was right enough, and fairly bound for the heavenly Canaan, as well as his neighbours; yet the commandment thus coming, *ſin revives, and he dies*; his hope and expectation by the law, or by his legal endeavours, give up the ghoſt. Now, till a man be brought to this field of *deſpair*, he is not brought half-way to the field of battle againſt the nations of enemies in his way to Canaan; but when the Lord brings a man to this deſpair in himſelf, and to deſpair of relief from creatures and means, then there begins to be *ſome hope in Iſrael concerning him.* Therefore,

5. Another little advance, while the Lord is bringing the man by little and little to the goſpel-camp, is this: he brings him from the field of *deſpair* to the

field

field of *hope*; I mean, to a distant sight of the cape of good-hope, in the hearing of the glad news of the gospel, concerning the Captain of salvation, in whom alone poor enslaved sinners may be made more than conquerors over sin, Satan, and the world; over death and hell, and all their spiritual enemies. The soul hears of this mighty Captain, that *he is able to save to the uttermost*; and so conceives hope, that perhaps he will shew mercy, and deliver a poor captive. I speak not here of the *new and lively hope*, that is the fruit and effect of faith; for, on this field of hope that I speak of, the man is yet between hope and despair, as it were: this hope cannot be a *helmet* to him, while he yet wants the *shield of faith*; yet it is such a hope, wrought by the objective revelation of the gospel, as keeps him from sinking into utter discouragement; and excites, enables, and encourages him to go forward, because he sees a door of hope open, in the call of the gospel, wherein he hears Christ calling him to come to him freely, and receive his grace. O there is the door of a new covenant open, says the man within himself; I see it is open for the like of me, and I am particularly called to come in at this open door: and now, when the man is brought to this, he is truly not *far from the kingdom of heaven*; not far from the field of battle: he needs but be holpen with a little help further, and then this course is complete. Therefore,

6. Another little advance is, after the soul is brought over all these fields, by the good hand of God upon him, he is brought to the field of *saving faith*, getting such a discovery of Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation, by the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*, as powerfully determines him to take on with him, as a volunteer, being *made willing in the day of power*; and being charmed with the glory of his person, the freedom of his grace, the holiness of the standard, and ruddy ensign dyed with his own blood. Here the man sees him *girding his sword upon his thigh*, even his *glory and majesty*. By this sword of glorious grace, the sinner is made a willing subject, a willing soldier, to follow the glorious Captain, and employ him to fight all his battles,

and

and drive out all the nations of his luſts before him. And now the man is a believer, and is come, indeed, to the field of battle, being joined to the Lord Jeſus, and disjoined from his old general: now he is, by virtue of union to Chriſt, intitled to a complete victory over all the nations of enemies in his way, and intitled to all theſe new recruits and reinforcements from heaven, that are neceſſary for the gradual ſubduing of the nations before him, till he win to the poſſeſſion of the heavenly Canaan.——Thus you ſee how, *by little and little*, the Lord brings them forth to the field of battle; and by what *various degrees* they are brought from ſlaves to the devil and their luſts, to be ſoldiers of Chriſt. But now, as by little and little he brings them to the field of battle againſt the nations in a day of power; ſo,

[2.] *By little and little* he *carries* on the conqueſt, till the *day of death*, when the warfare is accompliſhed. The text leads me to ſpeak of the Captain's part; *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations before thee, by little and little.* And indeed his part is the leading part in the All of this conqueſt; for, *without him we can do nothing.* To engage with the enemy alone, and encounter the nations in our own ſtrength, were madneſs; every luſt will laugh at the ſhaking of our ſpear. It is Chriſt alone, and his Spirit, that can deſtroy the nations before him. But now, the *gradual conqueſt*, till the day of death, by little and little, ſpeaks out theſe two things: 1. That the Iſrael of God hath many *ſad experiences* all their days, that their enemies, the nations, are not *utterly deſtroyed;* but are living and lively, ſtrong and prevalent many times. 2. That they have alſo many *ſweet experiences*, all their days, of ſome *little aid* and *auxiliaries* from heaven, whereby the enemy is driven out, and deſtroyed, by little and little, from time to time.

1. I ſay, this *gradual conqueſt*, taking place till death, and the warfare, ſpeaks out many *ſad experiences*, that the nations of their luſts, and corruptions, and ſpiritual enemies are not *utterly deſtroyed;* and that, notwithſtanding of their being got fairly under the colours of their glorious Captain, yet they will find, all their days, that their

enemies

enemies are living, lively, ſtrong, and prevalent: for, their deſtruction being but by *little and little*, the conqueſt may be many times undiſcernable, while the power of the enemy appears great and formidable, notwithſtanding any little advantage gained at a time, and while they find many dreadful ſallies and ſucceſsful excurſions that the enemy makes upon them. Now, may I not aſk the Iſrael of God here, if they have not too many ſad experiences of the yet remaining life and ſtrength of the enemy?—Does not your ſad experience ſay, that there is a *law in your members, warring againſt the law of your mind, and bringing you into captivity to the law of ſin, that is in your members*, Rom. vii. 23.; and that *you wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood only, but againſt principalities and powers?* Eph. vi. 12.—Does not ſad experience witneſs, how *violent your corruptions* are, and how impetuouſly they break through every hedge, notwithſtanding of your being ſure to be ſcratched with thorns; and how eagerly they follow the bait, even when the hook is moſt diſcernable?—Does not ſad experience witneſs, that it is *within you* that troubles and aſſaults you moſt; and that your greateſt adverſaries are the *men of your own houſe;* and that in the worſt of times, there is always more cauſe to complain of an *evil heart*, than of an *evil world;* and that it is this carnal heart eſpecially, that clogs and incumbers your flight and motion towards God, and makes, many times, your choiceſt duties to be like a grievous taſk?—Does not ſad experience witneſs, even ſince you was brought to the field of battle againſt your ſpiritual enemies, that there is more *wickedneſs in your heart*, ſiding with the enemy, than you could have believed, though it had been told you? When once a day you got your feet upon the necks of your enemies, you could never have thought they would ever ſo fearfully prevail again; or, if you had thought it, would it not have been a terror to you?—Does not ſad experience witneſs ſuch a *power of corruption*, that no ſooner did you ever begin to parly with a temptation at a diſtance, and adventure to ſport therewith, but it quickly hath turned to earneſt, and carried all before it? So much fewel and gun-powder for the

enemy

enemy do you carry about with you, that you take fire upon the ſmalleſt touch, and are ready to be blown up with the flame?—Does not ſad experience witneſs, how ſoon the *ſtrongeſt reſolution*, even under the ſweeteſt gales, will evaniſh; that you are not oft in the evening what you was in the morning, nor for many hours do you keep the ground you had attained; and how quickly you deſtroy that which grace hath built, inſomuch, that if grace were not ſtronger to ſave and preſerve, than you are to mar and deſtroy, you would be undone for ever? Is it not paſt reckoning, how oft your heart hath thus deceived you? And is it not plain that the word of God knows your heart better than you do, declaring it to be *deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked?*—Does not ſad experience ſhow you, that the *devil*, who heads and leads the nations of luſts and corruptions, hath the *advantage of the ground?* and knows how to correſpond with your corruption, and ſuits his temptation to your natural temper, to your calling and company, and predominant inclination, and even to your retirement and ſolitude; and that he can even then moſt dangerouſly tempt, when the temptation is leaſt ſeen and diſcovered; and that by his temptation he drives not only at the bringing ſin to the thoughts, but to the act, for putting ſome blot upon your walk and converſation?—Does not ſad experience ſhew you, that it is hard, difficult, and dangerous, to *dance about the fire*, and *not be burnt*; and that the temptation, which, at a diſtance, ſeemed ſmall, upon a nearer approach you have found had more bands on your heart than you could have dreamed it would have had; and how impoſſible it is, many times, to ſtop the current to which, through unwatchfulneſs you have given a vent?—Does not ſad experience witneſs, how the power and prevalency of corruption hath *conſumed the vitals* of your ſpiritual life, and tumbled you down headlong into confuſion; eſpecially when you have given conſcience a wramp, by doing violence to light, in ſiding with the enemies, and adventuring on the occaſions of a temptation? When you have gone, with Peter, to the high-prieſt's hall, without a warrant or a call, hath it not coſt

you

you dear, insomuch, that you have found bold sinning hath made faint believing, and turned all your comfort to the door, leaving nothing behind but bitterness and death?—Do you not find your sins have a *weakening*, *captivating*, *vexing*, and *tormenting* power?——But many sad experiences of this sort, and thousands of them in their life-time, may even the true Israel of God have, whereby they find, to their sad cost, that the nations of corruptions are alive and powerful; as this gradual conquest, *by little and little*, declares.

2. It shows also, that they have many *sweet experiences*, on the other hand, of some little succours and auxiliaries, some small aids and supplies from heaven, whereby the enemy is driven out, and destroyed, from time to time; and this all the days of their life also, till the warfare be accomplished at death. I am speaking of these that have been brought to the field of battle, as I shewed before; and how the Lord, by little and little, makes the nations of lusts sometimes to flee before them. But by how many *littles*, in the believer's life-time, this warfare is carried on, who can tell? And how many little recoveries, little revivings, little supplies, little supports, little strengthening meals, little sin-killing antidotes, little soul-restoring cordials; how many of these little sweet things, or sweet little things, the Lord their God allows them, from time to time, that by little and little they may gain the day, is not possible to tell, they are so many. The poor fighting believer may get a thousand of them in a year; and ten thousands of them in his life-time; and, perhaps, more than half a score of them at one communion.—Sometimes he gets a *little new discovery* of the *glorious Captain*, after he hath been long out of sight, and hiding himself: and a new sight of the glory of the Lord fills the Israelite's heart with new life and courage, and hope of prevailing; for then he sees Christ to be a full magazine of all military provision, and an open magazine to give out armour for the war; and so he becomes *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. Indeed, so many little glances of the glory of Christ that the believer gets, so many little victories does he get over the enemy.—Again, some-

times he gets a *little out-pouring of the Spirit of prayer*, and of the *Spirit of adoption*, crying, ABBA, *Father*: O Father, may he ſay, pity a poor child, harraſſed with the devil, and captivate by the power of indwelling luſts and corruptions. O! but this gives the believer a little eaſe and relief, when he can get his heart poured out into the boſom of his beſt and moſt glorious friend, complaining of the tyranny of the tempter, and the prevailing of the nations. Here is a little victory, when he gets a little grace to put the enemies of his ſoul into the hands of his Captain, ſaying, Vengeance, Lord; vengeance be executed upon theſe enemies, that diſhonour thy name, and diſturb the peace of my ſoul.—Again, ſometimes he gets a *little diſcovery of the enemy's power* and *policy*, and *ſtrongeſt holds*; ſo as, knowing the *depths of Satan*, and not being *ignorant of his devices*, the believer is thereby put in caſe to be upon his guard: and eſpecially he is made to ſee and obſerve the old man of ſin, that deadly cut-throat, that lies within his boſom: and while he is *bemoaning himſelf*, with Ephraim: and crying out with Paul, *Oh wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* The enemy is loſing ground.—Again, ſometimes he gets a *little communication of life*, after a deadneſs of ſpirit that ſeized him; and a little recovery, after a fit of the falling-ſickneſs and backſliding: and the new communication of life and health to the ſoul, makes him ſtart up to his feet again, renew the aſſault, and purſue the enemy with more vigour and reſolution than ever; like a man that grows ſtronger than before. Indeed, that ſpiritual ſickneſs of the believer is *not unto death, but unto the glory of God*; which his being recovered from, makes him fight more courageouſly, and watch more carefully againſt the enemy than ever he did.—Again, ſometimes he gets a *little grip of a promiſe*, ſuch as that, *I will ſubdue thine iniquity; ſin ſhall not have dominion over thee; fear not, for I am with thee; the God of peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly*: and having theſe promiſes, he is encouraged to the holy war, namely, to *cleanſe* himſelf *from all filthineſs of the fleſh and of the ſpirit, and to perfect holineſs in the fear of the Lord*. Why, the promiſe

promiſe takes hold of his heart, and his heart takes hold of the promiſe, and therein he ſees that the ſtrength of Iſrael is engaged to carry him through the hoſt of his enemies. And thus, every little grip of a promiſe by faith, is a little victory; there needs no more to give a chaſe to the enemy, than a little upſtirring of faith, on a promiſing God in Chriſt, and dependence on him under the conduct of his Spirit.—Again, ſometimes he gets a *little grace to wait upon the Lord*, while the promiſe is not yet accompliſhed, until he *bring forth judgment unto victory;* and *the Lord is a God of judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him: he that believes, ſhall not make haſte;* knowing *the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong:* and hence the believer will find that his *ſtrength is to ſit ſtill*, and *quietly to wait for the ſalvation of the Lord.*—Again, ſometimes he gets a *little godly ſorrow*, that works *repentance unto life:* goſpel-repentance, iſſuing from a ſight of crucified Chriſt, brings along with it a train of artilery for ſubduing the enemy; *What carefulneſs does it work*, ſays the apoſtle; *yea, what clearing of ourſelves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement deſire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge?* 2 Cor. vii. 11. When the heart is melting before the Lord in godly ſorrow, O what revenge is it meditating againſt the nations of luſts and corruptions! O how glad would the believer be then to waſh his hands in the blood of all his ſpiritual enemies! For, at the ſame time, he gets a little reſentment of his own ingratitude, ſaying, *O do I thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh and unwiſe?* A little holy ſhame and bluſhing before the Lord, at the thoughts of his own brutiſhneſs, ſaying, *Behold I am vile;* and a little ſoul-debaſement, caſting indignity upon himſelf, and giving glory to the Lord, ſaying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*, I am a beaſt, I am a devil; but yet I come to thee, to caſt out the devil, and get glory to thy name.—Further, ſometimes he gets a *little intimation of peace and pardon*, a *little ſprinkling of the blood of Chriſt upon the conſcience*, to purge it from dead works; and a *little application of that blood* by the hand of the Spirit, ſhewing him that

the *blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.* And this bloody banner of the Lamb, being displayed, makes the nations to flee before him; *They overcome by the blood of the Lamb.*—Sometimes they get a *little opening of the heart,* like Lydia, at the hearing of the word; insomuch, that their hearts, that were dead within them like a stone, or ever they are aware take life and need-fire, with a word of grace, a word of power; and the more the heart opens to let in the King of glory, the more is the enemy shut out.—Sometimes they get a *little freedom and boldness at the throne of grace,* when they come thither to *obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need:* and when there they get a little strength to wrestle with the Lord for a blessing, saying, *Lord I will not let thee go, till thou bless me;* they get even *power with God* himself, as it is said of Jacob, Hos. xii. 4. *He had power over the angel, and prevailed.* And when a man is an overcomer in this sense, to have power with God; much more will he have power over the nations of enemies; *To him that overcometh, will I give power over the nations,* Rev. ii. 26.—Sometimes they get a *little anointing of the oil of gladness* wherewith Christ is anointed above his fellows; and when *the joy of the Lord is their strength;* and a little shower of the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit of Christ, for watering their graces, and drowning their corruptions.—Sometimes they get a *little look* and *glance* of the kind and compassionate eye of Christ, even after a denial, as he gave to Peter; and when they find him thus graciously looking to them, and kindly rebuking them, they *go out and weep bitterly:* and while they are shedding the tears of faith, they are shedding the blood of their enemies.—Sometimes they get a *little back-look upon an old experience* of the *Lord's putting the enemy to flight before them,* saying, *I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill Mizar;* or a little back-look upon an old promise that the Lord gave them with power: and when they are helped to plead it, saying, *Lord, remember the word on which thou hast caused me to hope;* the enemy gets a new dash.—Sometimes they get a *little opening of the door of hope in the valley*

valley of Achor, the lively hope of the heavenly Canaan through the reſurrection of Chriſt: and this hope is the ſinews of the holy war; for as *hope makes not aſhamed*, ſo *he that hath this hope purifies himſelf*; and, according to the meaſure of this hope, is the meaſure of victory.—Sometimes they get a *little pull of the cord of love*, ſo as to get the *love of God ſhed abroad upon their heart*, and then the *love of Chriſt conſtrains them*; the love of the Captain draws them to the field, where love is the ſignal for war; Chriſt's love, I mean: *His banner over me was love*, ſays the church. His love both leads the van, and fences the rear; and when the flame of his love to them kindles a flame of love in their hearts to him, then a flaming ſword is drawn in the face of the enemy, the banner of love beats down the nations.—Again, they ſometimes get a *little ſpiritual ſenſe* to carry on the ſpiritual war; for inſtance, ſometimes a little hearing of the voice of Chriſt, ſo as to know the powerful ſound of it among a thouſand voices; and then their heart leaps within them, ſaying, *It is the voice of my Beloved; behold, he cometh ſkipping upon the mountains, and leaping upon the hills.*—Sometimes they get a *little ſight of God in Chriſt*, and then they can *endure hardſhip, as good ſoldiers of Chriſt*; thus they *endure, as ſeeing him that is inviſible, counting the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than all the treaſures of Egypt.*—Sometimes they get a *little touch* of the *hem of Chriſt's garment by faith*; a little touch of his *name*, his *offices*, his *blood*, his *righteouſneſs*, or whatever hem it be; virtue comes from him to ſtop the bloody iſſue, and ſtop the enemies motion.—Sometimes they get a *little taſte that the Lord is gracious*; and it is like the taſte of Jonathan's honey-comb: the more they taſte of the honey of free-grace, the greater is the ſlaughter they make among the Philiſtines.—Sometimes they get a *little ſmell of the roſe of Sharon*, and the *Lily of the valley*, and it reſtores their fainting ſoul: all Chriſt's garments are ſaid to *ſmell of aloes, myrrh, and caſſia*: and the believer may be ſaid to get a ſmell of the raiment, a ſmell of the roſe, when Chriſt is precious to him above all things. And when all theſe ſpiritual ſenſes are exerciſed, then they may be ſaid to be

ex-

exercising their arms, making havock among their enemies, and successfully gaining ground upon them.—— In a word, he gives them sometimes a *little breathing in the air of spiritual meditation; My meditation of him shall be sweet:* and when Christ is sweet, sin is bitter, and the battle against it a bitter battle. He gives them *here a little*, and *there a little;* and, *by little and little, puts out the nations before them.*

I have mentioned many particulars; but yet there is no speaking of all the littles that believers will experience, during the time of their warfare: only, thus you see how, by little and little, their Captain brings them to the field of battle; and how, by little and little, he carries on the conquest in their hand: it is the Lord their God alone that does it; it is he that conquered their enemies; it is he that helps them to chase the conquered, for it is he that bought their armour; he bought their shield, and sword, and breast-plate, and helmet; and it is he, that as he bought them with his blood, so he puts on their weapons, and girds them with strength for war. It is he that rubs off the rust off their arms, when at any time they are out of use, by blowing up their graces, and giving them strength to exercise grace: and it is he that carries on the victory to perfection, by *giving power to the faint; and to him that hath no might, he encreaseth strength,* from time to time, till in death he end the warfare, by driving out all the nations, so as never to be seen again. *The Lord thy God, will put out these nations, before thee, by little and little.*

VI. The *sixth* thing proposed, was, to give the *reasons* of the doctrine. It might here be asked,

1*st*, Why the Lord their God, and he alone, does put out the nations before them? The reason is, because he alone can do it, for he is the *Lord;* they would never be put out, if he did it not: and he alone will do it, because he is *their God;* and thus stands engaged by promise and covenant so to do: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee.* But,

2*dly*, Why will he do it so *gradually*, by *little and little?* Why does he let enemies without and within live

to annoy his people, seeing it is easy for him to destroy them all instantly? Why will he destroy them gradually, by little and little? There is much of infinite wisdom to be observed in this disposure; and therefore I would offer some particulars for representing the beauty of this method.

1. It is by *little and little* he puts them out, without destroying them at once, that by them he may *prove his people*, Judges ii. 22. Some Canaanites were still left remaining, to *prove whether they will keep the way of the Lord:* these Canaanites were enemies to their peace, enemies to their profession, that sought their bodies overthrow, and their souls ruin; and they are left to prove whether they will cleave still to God's command, or whether they will follow the abominations of the wicked. Observe it then, Sirs, we must look to find enemies; outward enemies to the peace of the church, and to the truth of the gospel; inward enemies to the graces and comforts of the soul: and this combat, thus continued in Israel, serves to prove whether our graces be counterfeit or not; for they only are true Israelites, that are still taking up arms against the devil, the world, and the flesh, and all the nations of the Canaanites. By this then it is evidenced who are true Israelites, and who not.

2. It is by *little and little* that he will put out the nations before Israel, that thus they may be *still learning to exercise their arms;* I mean, that their graces may be exercised, and particularly their militant graces. There are some graces would be for little or no use, if no Canaanites and corruptions were left: the special use of *faith*, *hope*, and *patience*, is for helping the believer to surmount the difficulties that are now in his way. Many other graces there are, that there would be no use for, if all our enemies and corruptions were destroyed at once: triumphant graces, such as *love* and *joy* in their perfection, would make a perfect heaven. But there are militant graces, that must be exercised also, while we are on earth, and which there are no use for in heaven: for example, if all *wants were supplied fully*, there would be no need of *poverty of spirit;* if all *sins were*

wholly

wholly deſtroyed, there would be no need of *godly ſorrow;* if *death* were already *ſwallowed up in victory*, there would be no need of the *deſire of death*, nor longing for heaven; if *viſion* were already come, there would be no need of *faith*, as it is a militant grace, fighting its way many times through doubts and fears, and want of ſight and ſenſe; if *fruition* were come, there would be no need of *hope;* if all *trouble* were at an end, there would be no need of *patience*. But this *ſhield of faith*, and *helmet of hope*, and other parts of the Chriſtian armour, muſt be exerciſed: therefore the nations are not wholly deſtroyed, but by little and little. Again,

3. It is by *little and little* they are put out, for the advantage of the *militant ſaints* in many reſpects: as it is fit they ſhould fight, before they triumph; and that they war as ſoldiers on earth, before they reign as kings in heaven; ſince *no man is crowned, except he ſtrive lawfully*, 2 Tim. ii. 5. So it tends to enhance heaven, and make them prize and value it more, when it is attained through many difficulties, troubles, and oppoſitions: and by this means they come to have ſweet conformity to their bleſſed Captain of ſalvation, who was *made perfect through ſuffering;* and it is their honour to tread his ſteps, who *endured the contradiction of ſinners* againſt himſelf, and fought his way.—This contributes alſo to the believer's *comfort* at the iſſue of every conflict, as a ſafe haven is very comfortable to a mariner that hath been toſt at ſea.—This method ſerves not only for the believer's comfort, but for his *inſtruction* and *correction:* for his *inſtruction*, becauſe thus he learns more and more to be humble and dependent; all boaſting is excluded by this means, while he finds his enemies ſtill living, and lively, and ſtrong; for he looks with a humble eye upon himſelf, knowing his own utter inſufficiency for grappling with theſe enemies, and difficulties, and oppoſitions in his way; and with a dependent eye upon Chriſt, that his *grace may be ſufficient for him*, and his *ſtrength perfected in weakneſs:* thus he *glories in his infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon him.* And as it is advantageous for their neceſſary inſtruction, ſo for their neceſſary *correction*, when they are ſparing

and

and remiss in using the means, and improving the advantages for driving out the Canaanites, indulging the flesh and the corruptions thereof; as it is said of Israel, Numb. xxxiii. 55. *If they would not drive out the inhabitants of the lands, then it should come to pass, that these which they let remain should be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, to vex them.* This is one of the severest ways of chastising them, when, to reprove them for one sin and lust, he lets them fall into the hands of another; and yet, in mercy to the true Israel of God, curing their disease in the issue: as he let Peter fall into a threefold pit among his enemies hands, for curing his self-confidence. One would think, the cure was worse than the disease; but our Lord hath sometimes very fearful ways of correcting and curing the souls of his own people.

4. It is by *little and little* that the Lord puts out the nations before them, to *commend the excellency of the deliverance we have by Christ.* Though there be *no condemnation to them that are in Christ;* yet, for their humiliation, God suffers their enemies to live among them, and sin to live in them, and oftentimes to afflict them, that they may know the benefit they have by grace, while they make continual recourse to him for help. It is but little we can take up at once, by reason of our want of capacity; therefore he gives one deliverance at this time, and another deliverance at that time, and a third deliverance at another time; and so on from time to time, that we may know how much we are obliged to him.

5. He delivers them by *little and little*, to shew the *greatness of his glory*, as the Captain of salvation. He shews the glory of his power, in keeping us, notwithstanding the great danger we are continually in, while the enemy is alive within us, without us, and round about us. How greatly does his power appear, in preserving the tossed ark amidst all the waves and billows of adversity that dash against it, and in keeping the burning bush from being consumed? He shews the glory of his triumphant arms, like some famous conquerors in

battle, who, though they may, yet will not put all their enemies to the edge of the ſword, but will take ſome captives, and others they will keep alive againſt their day of triumph, and then to ſuffer death, to the greater ſhame of the conquered, and the greater glory of the conqueror. When Joſhua had diſcomfited theſe five kings that fought againſt Gibeon, chap. x. he would not ſlay them inſtantly, but ſhut them up in a cave cloſely, intending, when the battle was fully ended, to put them to death openly: ſo our great General and Captain, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *He ſtrikes through kings in the day of his wrath;* he leads *captivity captive;* he ſhuts up ſome of the kings and commanders of the helliſh nations, into the cave of the heart, where they may rage, yet they cannot rule any more; and at laſt crowns the ſolemnity of his triumph, by making a ſhew of them openly, and deſtroying them utterly.

6. He deſtroys them by *little and little*, that he may *counterplot the enemies in their own plot*, and *fight them with their own weapons*. It is the plot of hell, by little and little, to deſtroy ſinners; yea, and to *wear out the ſaints of the moſt High*, Dan. vii. 25. by one temptation on the back of another; therefore, by little and little the Lord will defeat the deſign of the devil, and *take the wiſe in their own craftineſs*. The wiſdom of heaven can eaſily counterplot the policy of hell: yea, thus he fights the enemy, and beats him with his own weapons. The tempter comes ſometimes, and bruiſes the believer's heel, as he did Chriſt's; upon which the believer is ſtirred up to look again to him that was bruiſed for his iniquity, and then the devil is ſure to get as good as he gave; for the bruiſed heel, he gets a broken head. Perhaps, ſome temptation gives the believer a trip, and down he falls; but the wiſe Captain makes uſe of that very fall, for giving the devil, and his hoſts, a greater foil than ever; for, after that fall, the believer goes alone, with Peter, and weeps it out: and watches, and prays, and fights better than he did before.

7. It is by *little and little* that the Lord conquers the nations of enemies in the way to the heavenly Canaan, becauſe, by little and little, his people muſt be made ready

ready for it; *By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, till thou be increaſed, and inherit the land*, Exod. xxiii. 30. As the Canaanites had kept poſſeſſion till Iſrael was grown into a people; ſo there were to be ſome remains of them, till Iſrael ſhould grow ſo numerous, as to repleniſh the whole. The land of Canaan had room enough to receive Iſrael, but Iſrael was not yet numerous enough to poſſeſs Canaan: even ſo here, the true Iſrael of God muſt be made ready for the heavenly Canaan, before they come there. They are not always in actual readineſs, therefore there is ſome ſervice they have to do for their Captain, ſome battle they have to fight with the enemy: they muſt have ſome more experience, and learn ſome more leſſons; therefore their poſſeſſion of Canaan is delayed till they be ready for it.

8. It is by *little and little* that the Lord drives out the nations before them, leſt the *beaſts of the field increaſe upon them;* to allude to that word which immediately follows the text, which we have alſo, Exod. xxiii. 9. *I will not drive them out before thee in one year, leſt the land become deſolate, and the beaſts of the field multiply againſt thee.* And thus it is with the children of God; if they had not enemies without and within, and oppoſitions in their way, there are ſome dangerous beaſts that would be ready to increaſe upon them: For inſtance, there is a beaſt they call *pride*, that might grow upon you, if you had no enemies to fight with; and while yet you are not ready for heaven, and ſanctification is incomplete. Hence a *thorn in the fleſh* was given to Paul, *that* he *might not be exalted above meaſure.* Is not the thorn in the fleſh well ordered, that prevents *confidence in the fleſh?*—There is a beaſt, they call *ſecurity*, might grow upon you; but now enemies are on all hands of you, to prevent your falling aſleep, and to keep you both watching and waking, and conſtantly on your guard.—There is a beaſt they call *preſumption*, that might grow upon you, and make you think you were able to go forward to heaven upon your own legs, and in your own ſtrength, if you found no ſuch enemy in the way.—There is another beaſt, they call *worldly-*

mindedneſs, that might grow upon you; if you got no adverſaries and adverſities to vex you, and wean you from the world; you would be in danger of ſaying, *It is good to be here*: but now the wars and battles, in your way to heaven, make you ſay with your heart, O it is better to be there.—There is a beaſt, a filthy brute beaſt, that they call *ſenſuality*, that might grow upon you, believer, that might make you lukewarm and formal in all your duties, as well as carnal, and light, and vain in the intervals of duties: but the ſight of your ſpiritual enemies on the field will make you ſee a need to be ſpiritual, zealous, earneſt, and *fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*.—There is alſo a filthy dumb beaſt, that they call *forgetfulneſs*, that would certainly grow upon your hand, and be very dangerous to your ſoul and ſpiritual welfare, if your enemies were all deſtroyed; therefore God ſays, Pſal. lix. 11. *Slay them not, leſt my people forget.* If the execution were quick and haſty, the impreſſions of it would not be deep and durable. Swift deſtructions ſtartle men for the preſent, but they are ſoon forgotten; therefore, when we think that God's judgments upon the nations of our ſpiritual enemies come on but very ſlowly, we muſt conclude that God hath wiſe and holy ends in that gradual procedure; *Slay them not, leſt my people forget.* They would forget to pray, if they had not enemies to pray againſt: they would forget to praiſe, if they had not ſtill new deliverances to praiſe him for: they would forget to pity theſe that are afflicted and toſſed with tempeſts like themſelves: they would forget their Captain, and their duty of living by faith and dependence on him: they would forget to take with their proper name, ſaying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*: they would forget to mourn for ſin, and repent: they would forget their own weakneſs, and their deliverer's power; and, like Jeſhurun, in proſperity would *waxfat, and forget God that made them, and lightly eſteem the rock of their ſalvation*: they would forget to ſing the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb at the ſide of the Red-ſea of the Lamb's blood, where their enemies are always drowned; even to ſing, ſaying, *The Lord hath triumphed glorioufly, the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into*

the

the sea; the Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name, Exod. xv. 1, 2, 3, &c.: they would forget to speak of the wonders of his mercy from time to time, and to give him the glory due unto his name: they would forget to employ him upon every new attack of the enemy, saying, *Lord, thou hast delivered; and in thee we trust that thou wilt deliver.* Better the enemy live and rage, and be not utterly destroyed, than that Christ want employment at your hand, and get not the glory of executing his saving office in your time of need. You would hardly think that so much advantage should accrue to the Israel of God, by the nations of their enemies not being destroyed at once, but by little and little.—— You see some of the filthy beasts that would increase upon you, if the Lord did not spare some of your spiritual enemies, devils, and lusts; which, though they may be called all beasts together, yet herein shines infinite wisdom in sparing one beast to destroy another: he may let *carnality* live in a believer sometimes, to kill his *pride;* much *ignorance* remain, to kill his *self-wisdom;* much *wandering* in, and *indisposition* for duty, to kill his *self-righteousness.*

Now, as it is with believers in particular, so with the church in general; why does God suffer tyrants, and atheists, and hypocrites, and heretics to live among them, and vex them, but for reaching many, if not all, of these ends that I have been naming. When the church was in adversity under the primitive ten persecutions, then religion flourished; the life of the tyrants tended to the life of religion in the persecuted church: but when the Roman emperors became Christian, and friendly to the church, then pride and security crept in with their prosperous state; the beasts of the field increased so much, that, by degrees, a blasphemous beast assumed the very name and office of being the *head of the church,* even a *beast with seven heads and ten horns,* mentioned, Rev. xiii. 1.; I mean, the Roman Antichrist. And then, why hath a nation of heretics, with erroneous principles and doctrines, been spared and continued in the church from time to time, but that the friends of truth might have occasion to clear and vindicate it,

and

and to *contend earneſtly for the faith once delivered to the ſaints?* *There muſt be hereſies*, ſays the apoſtle, *that they that are approven may be made manifeſt*; there muſt be errors, that truth may be more clearly diſcovered and maintained. Some precious truths had never been ſet into ſuch a clear light, if oppoſite errors had not been vented for darkening the ſame. Thus our Covenant-obligations in Scotland are denied by ſome, that their obligation may be the more aſſerted by others: thus alſo there is an ungodly nation left alive, that the godly may be diſtinguiſhed from them, and exerciſed the more unto godlineſs; and a hypocritical nation, that true Iſraelites, that are ſo indeed, may try themſelves, and become the more ſincere and upright.

VII. The *application* now remains to be ſpoken to. Is it ſo, that as the true Iſrael of God have nations in their way to the poſſeſſion of the heavenly Canaan, ſo the Lord their God will conquer theſe nations by little and little?

1ſt, It may be applied in a word of *dehortation* and *caution*, in theſe four particulars;

1. Beware of thinking that you may *ſafely neglect the means*, becauſe this work of putting out the nations belongs wholly to the Lord. This were a lazy Antinomian concluſion, drawn from ſuch promiſes, as rather bear the greateſt encouragement in the world to make a diligent uſe of the means. If it be a good reaſon of *working out our ſalvation with fear and trembling*, that the *Lord works in us both to will and to do*, which is the apoſtle's argument, Phil. ii. 12, 13.; then it is as good a reaſon for warring, and uſing all the means neceſſary for accompliſhing this ſpiritual warfare, that it is the Lord our God that conquers the enemy for us by little and little. Yea, this is ſuch a neceſſary conſideration, that, take away this argument, and there remains no encouragement to uſe the means at all: and hence it is only believers that are capable of this ſpiritual warfare; and only believers in Chriſt that are capable of the right and diligent uſe of the means that relate thereunto: for they cannot be uſed duly, but in the faith of this encouragement,

couragement, *The Lord thy God will go before thee*, to conquer the nations of enemies in your way. Unbelievers, indeed, ought to use the means, because the Lord commands the use thereof; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, neglect no commanded duty and ordinance wherein the Lord uses to be found. But yet I say again, never will any soul use the means aright, and acceptably, till something of the real true faith of this encouragement excite him: therefore, O believer, neglect not to read, and hear, and pray, and meditate, and use all commanded duties and ordinances; for there you must expect to meet with your Captain, that hath engaged to put out the nations before thee.

2. Beware of thinking that the *strength of the warfare lies upon you*, because you are obliged to use the means; and that it is your using the means that will do the business. As the former is a lazy, so this is a legal thought, and as pernicious and destructive as the other: for, if you lean upon the means, and think that your reading, praying, hearing, and the like, will drive out the nations, bring down the body of death, or subdue one corruption, that were a beating your enemies with a sword of straw: such a fleshly weapon will never draw blood of your spiritual enemies; and, instead, of getting victory over your sins by such legal weapons, you are brought under greater bondage; *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse:* and to be under the law, is to be under the dominion of sin; for, *the strength of sin is the law.* This legal method then were to be opening a fore-door to let out the enemy, and, at the same time, opening a back-door to let them in, and that with more advantage against you than ever. As it is a dangerous extreme to neglect means, upon pretext that Christ must do all, since his doing all is the greatest encouragement thereunto; so it is as dangerous on the other hand to use means, upon a notion that you must do all, or that the weight of the warfare depends upon you, and your duties: for your entertaining that notion, is the greatest discouragement in the world to the use of the means, and gives your enemies the great-

est

eſt advantage againſt you, even in that wherein you think to defeat them.

3. Beware of thinking that you may *lawfully enter into a league with any of your enemies*, becauſe they are not to be deſtroyed but *by little and little*. See what God ſays to Iſrael, with reſpect to the Canaanites, verſe 2. of this chapter where the text lies, and elſewhere; *Thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor ſhew mercy to them.* While we are ſhowing that ſanctification and mortification is not perfected in the ſaints while they are here, and that the nations of luſts even in their heart, are not all to be deſtroyed in this world; ſome carnal heart may be ready to think, My bleſſing on the miniſter, who, by this doctrine, makes me think I may get to heaven though my luſts be not all deſtroyed, and though I indulge myſelf in ſome of the pleaſures of the fleſh; and, I hope, *I may have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt*, and one ſin to another. Say you ſo, man, woman? I muſt tell you, that your ſpeech bewrays you, that you are not an Iſraelite bound for the heavenly Canaan; for, curſed is that piece that is conſiſtent with a ſtanding league and covenant with any luſt whatſoever. Such are *in covenant with death*, and *at agreement with hell*; and, *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The children of God dare not maintain a league with any luſt, nor will they ſhew mercy on their moſt darling luſts: nay, as it is ſaid of ſome, that their *tender mercies are cruelty*; ſo I may ſay of the believer, in this caſe, that his moſt tender mercy toward his moſt beloved luſt is cruelty: when he acts like himſelf, he is ſo cruel-hearted, he would cut the throat of it, if he could, and even of all his luſts.

4. Beware of thinking that believers have *no advantage againſt the nations of their enemies, ſins and luſts*, more than others, becauſe they are not utterly deſtroyed: nor let believers themſelves think, that becauſe their deliverance is not effected preſently, therefore it will never be effected; for the Lord their God is upon the deſtroying work, only he will take his own time and his own way to his own work, and his time and

way

way both is the beſt: *The Lord thy God will* do it *by little and little.* Hence a believer may be getting advantage, and gaining ground upon corruptions and luſts, even when he feels them ſtirring and raging moſt violently: it may be they have got a dead ſtroak for all that; as a beaſt that hath got a death's blow, may break off from thoſe that are holding it, and turn more mad than ever, and yet will die at length of the ſame blow. The devil may rage moſt, when he knows that his time is ſhort, and that he will be ſoon caſt out, and bruiſed under feet. Corruption is not always ſtrongeſt, when its motions are moſt felt; it may be ſtrongeſt, when the ſtrength of it is not ſeen.

Uſe 2. The *ſecond* uſe may be for *information.* Many things might be here inferred; as,

1. Hence we may ſee the *privilege even of a viſible church*, whom the Lord hath not *utterly forſaken*, tho' *filled with ſin*, as it is ſaid, Jer. li. 5. As they have the Lord for their God, in the ſenſe that I explained before, and as Iſrael here was privileged; ſo, by virtue of that relation to God as their God, they may have manifold mercies in common among them, as a mixed viſible church, beyond the reſt of the world: the Lord may appear for them againſt the heathen nations that are about them, and that are among them; and he may do great things for them, by virtue of that relation that he ſtands in to them as their God, and they his profeſſing people. As this text relates to Iſrael of old literally, it repreſents a privilege common to all that people, namely, the Lord's driving out the nations of the Canaanites before them; and may we not ſay, The Lord hath in like manner dealt with us, particularly in the church of Scotland, ſeveral times?—As the Lord *planted a church here very early*, not many years after Chriſt's aſcenſion; ſo by little and little he drove out the heathen nations before us: when our own forefathers were a race of blind Pagans here, the Lord deſtroyed that idolatry, and gradually enlarged his church, till, in proceſs of time, Popery entering in, we were over-run with Antichriſtian nations. But lo, when the time to favour Zion was come; I mean,

mean, the time of the Reformation from Popery, the Lord was pleaſed to drive out theſe other nations before us by little and little, and gradually carried on the Reformation-work, and that by the method of ſolemn covenanting with him; and this covenanting work was carried on by little and little, again and again, till the whole nation came under ſolemn obligations this way. —As Iſrael *avouched the Lord to be their God*, by ſolemn covenants, that were binding and obligatory upon them and their poſterity after them; ſo, in this duty of *vowing to the Lord*, which is a moral duty, and conſequently incumbent on the church of God under the new, as well as old diſpenſation, and not like the types and ſhadows that were to be done away: in this moral duty, I ſay, we in our forefathers followed the example of the church of God in ſcripture, by entering into ſolemn covenant with him; which work the Lord, in many ſignal ways, countenanced with his preſence, in the remarkable effuſion and out-pouring of the Spirit, to the converſion of multitudes. It is the glory of a church, when God avouches them for his people, by the external diſpenſation of the covenant of grace; and it is alſo the glory of a church, when they avouch God to be their God, in a moſt ſolemn Covenant of duty and ſervice. This was a part of Scotland's glory, attended with internal diſplays of the power and glory of God in the ſanctuary.—To prove the obligation of theſe Covenants upon poſterity to all generations, were, I ſuppoſe, needleſs in this auditory; neither would time allow me to inſiſt here: but I think, to diſparage theſe Covenants, and to deny the obligation thereof, is to caſt dung upon our glory, and to tread our honour in the duſt; yea, I think it worſe than the breaking, burning, and burying of them: for a broken covenant may be mended again; a burnt covenant may come forth out of the furnace again; yea, a buried Covenant may riſe again, when God raiſes up a Reformation ſpirit: but to beſpatter the reputation of them, and impugn the obligation of them, is, I think, to render them odious to all generations, inſtead of binding upon them.—But now, as our Reformation was carried on

by

by little and little; ſo, when it is under a decay in many reſpects, let us look to the Lord our God, that, by little and little, it may be revived again, in the Lord's own time and way.

2. As we ſee hence the privileges of a viſible church; ſo the ſpecial and peculiar privilege of the *true Iſrael of God*, the church *ſpiritual and inviſible*, though militant on earth: the Lord their God will caſt out the nations before them in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and that by little and little. May it not be ſaid of them, as it is, Deut. xxxiii. 29. *Happy art thou, O Iſrael; who is like unto thee, O people ſaved by the Lord, who is the ſhield of thy help, and the ſword of thine excellency?* And verſe 27. *The eternal God is thy refuge, underneath are his everlaſting arms; He ſhall thruſt out the enemy before thee, and ſhall ſay, Deſtroy them.* What though all the nations of the world were againſt them, outward and inward; the nations of earth and hell both? Yet he, who is the King of nations, is for them; and if God be for them, who can be againſt them? He can deſtroy nations for their ſake; *I gave Egypt for thy ranſom; Ethiopia and Seba for thee.* The nations may fight, but cannot prevail; nay, the *gates of hell can never prevail againſt them.* Why? they have the Lord for their God; and their God is their guard. And as the common relation that God ſtands in to a mixed viſible church, intitles them to many privileges while that relation ſtands; ſo the ſpecial relation, that the true Iſrael of God ſtand in to him, as their God in Chriſt, by a ſpiritual, indiſſolvable union, intitles them to all ſpiritual bleſſings and deliverances. However difficult and dangerous their way to the heavenly Canaan is, by reaſon of the numerous oppoſing nations, which they can never deſtroy of themſelves; yet their God and Captain leads the van, and drives out the nations before them.

3. See here the *miſerable caſe of the nations that know not God*, and are *enemies to the people of God.* Why, like the curſed Canaanites, they are *devoted to deſtruction*; they vex themſelves in vain, when they fight againſt the *Lord and his anointed.* The Lord God of Iſrael is to drive them out; yea, he will drive them to hell, that

continue in their enmity againſt God and his people: *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.* Yea, the greateſt miſery of all the wicked, that remain in a Chriſtleſs ſtate, lies in this, though they do not ſee it to be their miſery, namely, that they are under the power of all the nations of hell, under the power of the devil and their luſts, and in league with the nations that oppoſe the true Iſrael of God in their way to the heavenly Canaan.

4. Hence we may ſee the reaſon of the *multiplied experiences of the believer*, both ſad and ſweet; becauſe the nations are caſt out before him by little and little, and not utterly deſtroyed while he is here. Hence many ſad tales he hath to tell of the *nations compaſſing him about; iniquities prevailing againſt him;* and luſts again and again, and a thouſand times, ſtirring, and working, and warring, and overthrowing him, and treading upon him. And, on the other hand, notwithſtanding all this, he hath many ſweet tidings to narrate of the Lord's humbling and healing, convincing and converting him: many convictions, many converſions does he get from time to time; and the next conviction more deep than the former, and the next converſion more ſweet than the former; and one converſion on the back of another, becauſe of one defection on the back of another, through the power of the nations of hell within and without him. As a dying ſaint that was aſked, when he was converted? ſaid, *He had been converted a hundred times:* ſo, in this ſenſe, it is poſſible ſome believers, of long ſtanding, may be converted a hundred times, and a hundred too. That ſaints may need converſion, is plain from what Chriſt ſaid to Peter who was a ſaint, *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.* Yea, every new converſion of the believer, may be more remarkable than another, while the Lord is thus, by little and little deſtroying the enemy; becauſe every touch of the nations power and policy in drawing him aſide from the Lord, and the recurring power of corruption, is ſo horrible and monſtrous to him, that he thinks with himſelf, Oh! will ever the Lord return again to the like of me? And, when the Lord returns, he wonders more than ever.

5. Hence

5. Hence we may see, why there is no *justification by the deeds of the law*, nor *mortification by the means of the law*: no justification by legal works, nor sanctification and mortification by legal means. How does this follow, say you? Indeed it is plain, there can be no justification by the *deeds* of the law; for the best believer on earth must own, that at best he hath *two nations in his womb, and the company of two armies*; an army of lusts, and an army of graces; the *flesh lusting against the Spirit*, as well as the *Spirit against the flesh*: and when he finds nations of lusts and corruptions in his womb, in his heart, can he expect to be justified by the deeds of the law, by a legal righteousness of his own? No; he is made content to be obliged to grace, free grace, through the righteousness of Christ, for justification.—And as there is no justification by legal works, so there is no mortification by legal *means*; they never saw the power of corruption, that are not convinced of this, that nothing in the world but the power of God can destroy it: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee, by little and little.* O Sirs, pity ignorant Papists, that think their whipping, and scourging, and beating themselves, will do it: pity ignorant professors, that think their fasting, and praying, and legal endeavours, will do it. It is true, our Lord speaks of some devils that go not out but by *fasting and prayer*: not that these means of themselves do it; nay, let our Lord explain his own word; *The Lord thy God will put out these nations*, he will subdue your iniquities: such *things go not forth but by fasting and prayer*; that is, by Christ Jesus, sought and found in these means. Neglect not the means then; but, for the Lord's sake, remember, that if you go forth against lusts in the strength of means, or only with a verbal mention of the strength of Christ, without ever having taken on with this glorious Captain, or being joined to him in order to draw strength from him, your leviathan lusts will but laugh at the shaking of your spear. Therefore,

6. Hence we may see where the *believer's strength lies*. You heard before where the strength of the enemy lies; but now, where lies the strength of the Israel of God? Even

Even in the GOD of Iſrael, the KING of Iſrael: *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations before thee.* Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *My fleſh and heart faileth; but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* My outward advantages, inward vigour, and all fail me; but my God will not fail me. More particularly, Iſrael's ſtrength lies in God, as manifeſting himſelf in Chriſt. There are two things in Chriſt that ſtrength lies in, for the believer's ſafety and deliverance from the power of ſin, and victory over the nations of luſts and devil's: one is the blood of Chriſt; we *overcome by the blood of the Lamb:* the death of Chriſt was the death of ſin, for he nailed ſin to the croſs, and deſtroyed the devil's power. Another is the Spirit of Chriſt, who being in the believer, *greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world;* and the Spirit mortifies ſin. Here lies the believer's great ſtrength, for actual mortification of ſin, and victory over it; *If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live,* Rom. viii. 13. And the Spirit carries on this work,

(1.) By the *application of the death of Chriſt* to the ſoul; for, it is the virtue flowing forth from the death of Chriſt, that deſtroys ſin; and the Spirit applies that virtue, and implants the ſoul into Chriſt, that being ingrafted in him, and unite to him, the ſin-killing, ſoul-quickening virtue of Chriſt may flow in to the believer.

(2.) By the *implantation of grace*, and of grace contrary to corruption: in oppoſition to *unbelief*, he implants *faith*; in oppoſition to *enmity*, he implants *love*; in oppoſition to *ſlaviſh fear*, he implants *fortitude* and *ſpiritual courage.*

(3.) By the *excitation of the grace he hath implanted;* which, though it be active in itſelf, yet, by reaſon of our indiſpoſition, needs to be whetted and actuated: when the Spirit lets grace alone, ſin revives, and gathers ſtrength.

(4.) By *drawing forth faith*, eſpecially to a lively exerciſe; and then *this is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith;* while the Spirit of faith draws forth the grace of faith: for faith carries up the ſoul to him

him in whom ſtrength lies; and then ſays, *I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening me:* and faith employs the ſtrength of Chriſt againſt the ſtrength of the enemy, and ſo triumphs in its noble General, being *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Faith begets, in the ſoul, an antipathy againſt all ſins and luſts, purifying the heart, and ſetting it directly againſt ſin. Tell a carnal heart, ſin lies at the door; why, let it come in, it is a friend of mine: but, acquaint a believer, exerciſing faith, that there is ſin in ſuch a thing; oh! it is an abomination. Faith diſcovers the danger the ſoul is in by the nations of luſts that encompaſs it, and excites all the faculties of the ſoul to riſe up againſt it, ſaying, *Riſe, Samſon, for the Philiſtines are upon thee;* canſt thou ſleep in the midſt of troops and armies of luſts? And ſo it rouzes the ſoul to ſigh, and groan, and pant, and pray, and cry, and wreſtle; and ſo to overcome, under the ſtandard of the glorious Captain.

Uſe 3. The *third* uſe is for *examination.* Hence we may ſee matter for *trying our ſtate by:* what is the mark of a candidate for heaven, a traveller to Canaan? Why, *The Lord his God is driving out the nations before him, by little and little.* Is the battle with the nations commenced, and fairly begun? And, is the Lord gradually carrying it on?

QUEST. *How ſhall I know if the war is commenced, and progreſſively going forward?*

ANSW. For a ſolution of this inquiry, you may take a mark or two out of the boſom of the text.

1. Have you got a *view of the nations,* that are in your way? I mean, a view and diſcovery of your corruption, your original and actual ſin, and your natural bondage and ſlavery by reaſon thereof? Have you ſeen nations of luſts within you? and have you ſeen them to be ſuch powerful nations, that nothing but the power of omnipotence can drive out? And conſequently, have ſeen your own utter impotency to drive them out of yourſelf? Have you ſeen them to be ſuch politic nations, and ſo fraudulent, that nothing but the infinite wiſdom of God could counteract this policy of hell; know-

knowing your *heart* to be *deceitful above all things*, as well as *desperately wicked?* Have you seen them to be such spiritual nations, *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, that no carnal weapon could avail in this warfare, but only such *spiritual weapons as are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strong holds?* Have you seen them to be such numerous nations, that your name is LEGION; a legion of lusts, a legion of devils, that nothing but a word from Jesus can put out?—Now, this mark excludes all that never *saw themselves*, and their own *natural bondage and thraldom*; they are yet serving the nations, which they ought to be driving out. They who know the plagues of their own heart, and have experienced the power of these nations in their way, look more like the travellers to Canaan. But take this mark in conjunction with what follows.

2. Have you got a discovery of a *God in Christ*, the glorious Captain of salvation, in whom alone your help and salvation lies, and who alone can put out these nations before you? Hath the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ* been given to you, so as to *reveal Christ in you*, and so as you have sometime or other got *Christ in you the hope of glory*, Christ in you the hope of victory? Have you seen Christ, as a victorious Conqueror, triumphing over all the nations of spiritual enemies, *Travelling in the greatness of his strength, treading the wine-press alone, when of the people there was none with him, staining all his raiment with the blood of the enemy, and trampling them in his fury*; as this is elegantly represented, Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. Have you seen *help laid upon One that is mighty*, one whose name is JESUS and JEHOVAH both? JEHOVAH is his name, in the first word of our text; and *his name is called* JESUS, *because he saves his people from their sins*. As many discoveries as you have got of the glory of Christ as the Captain of salvation, so many marks of victory begun have you.—But this mark excludes all that never get their *eyes opened* to see any *form or comeliness in Christ*, or any *beauty wherefore they should desire him*: and hence the beauty and glory of a present world bulks more in their eyes.

3. Hath the discovery of the glory of the Conqueror

looſed

looſed your heart from all other lords and lovers, and joined *your heart unto him as the Lord your God*, the Lord your captain, the Lord your righteouſneſs, the Lord your ſtrength, the Lord your ſalvation? *The Lord thy God will put out the nations before thee.* Now, the heart-drawing diſcovery of Chriſt, uniting the ſoul to him, is a great matter; for thus the believer is unite to Chriſt by faith, and the relation conſtitute, ſo as he is the Lord thy God, thy Head. Indeed a ſaving diſcovery of God in Chriſt, natively brings this along with it: if you ſee not God in Chriſt, thou cannot ſee him to be thy God, but rather thy enemy; but to ſee him in Chriſt, is to ſee him thy God, and thy friend: for they that ſee him in Chriſt, they ſee him in whom he is well-pleaſed; and to ſee God well-pleaſed in him, is to ſee God as thy God. This appropriation, then, is imported in the very nature of faith, according to the meaſure of it; and the ground of this believing appropriation is the word of promiſe, *I will be thy God*, which is the great fundamental promiſe; and the proper echo of faith is, AMEN; I will take it on thy word, that thou wilt be my God, Zech. xiii. 9. *I will ſay, It is my people; and they ſhall ſay, The Lord is my God.* There the Spirit of God declares what ſhall be the language of faith, when it acts like faith indeed, *The Lord is my God.* But, ſay you, can every believer ſay, *The Lord is my God?* My friends, I never thought that every believer could ſay ſo, nor that any believer in the world could always ſay ſo: but as every believer is not always believing; ſo I ſpeak of what faith ſays when it is acting, and what the believer ſays when he is believing, not when he is doubting and miſbelieving. Neither do I think that every act of faith is a ſaying expreſly, *He is my God*; but every appropriating act of faith ſays this upon the matter, and every heart-engaging view of a God in Chriſt hath a *my God* wrapt up in the boſom of it, whether it dare ſay it expreſly or not; for, in Chriſt, they ſee him to be a well-pleaſed God, and a friend. You know, ſaving faith is thy "receiving and reſting "on Chriſt for ſalvation, as he is offered *to thee*, to "thee in the goſpel promiſe;" and this receiving is no

other thing than believing, John i. 12.; and ſo it is a taking him on his word for ſalvation *to thee*, as a Captain *to thee*. Take away this particular application, and it is no faith at all, and conſtitutes no union to him, no relation to him as *the Lord thy God*. I aſk then, if the diſcovery of the glory of Chriſt hath joined your heart to him as the glorious Captain of ſalvation, ſo as you have been taken on with him? Then thou art intitled to the complete victory; *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations before thee.*—This mark excludes all theſe that *never cloſed with Chriſt by a peculiar believing*, but ſatisfy themſelves with a general faith, and may be called but general believers; they have no particular words on which they have been cauſed to hope, and no particular faith applying Chriſt to themſelves. Such ſeem not yet to have entered the field of battle, nor cloſed with the Captain.

4. Hath the Lord *begun to put out theſe nations before you?* Hath he begun to exert his power, by ſubduing your luſts? Did you never know the day wherein Satan fell like lightening, as it were, from heaven; when the ſtrong man and his goods, that were at eaſe, were caſt out of his habitation? How was it with you in the day of believing, in the day when the Lord your God manifeſted himſelf, and appeared as a mighty Conqueror to you? Got you not all your luſts and corruptions, as it were, drowned in the blood of the Lamb, ſo as you thought you ſhould never ſee them again? You know, believer, that was a falſe thought, but yet it was a glad thought to you, to think ye would never be under the feet of your corruptions again, and you would never diſhonour the Lord as you had done, however ſome time or other you have found the Lord pulling down the ſtrong holds of unbelief, atheiſm, and enmity, and giving you the necks of your enemies. This looks like a good work begun, a battle begun, and a breach made upon the rule and dominion of ſin.—This mark excludes all theſe, in whom *ſin ſtill reigns*, and in whom the glorious Captain hath never ſo much as begun to give a blow to the enemy.

5. If you be a ſoldier on your march to the heavenly Canaan,

Canaan, then I ask you, If you be of any considerable *standing in the Lord's way?* Have you not had many a bloody battle with the nations, and many a fearful onset by the enemy, attacking you with main force, and may be taking you captive; yea, and bringing you into *captivity to the law of sin that is in your members?* Rom. vii. 23. Have you not found your enemies returning with such power and prevalency, that you was ready to think that you had lost all ground that ever you had got, and lost all the victories that ever you had gained, the Canaanites prevailing against you? *Iniquities prevail against me*, says David. You would think this an odd mark; for, says the believer, it is the prevalency of sin that makes me fear I am not a true Israelite bound for Canaan. But stay a little till I further clear it.—This mark excludes all these, in whom sin and lusts have not the power of *prevalency* only, but the power of dominion.

QUEST. *What is the difference between the power of* PREVALENCY, *and the power of* DOMINION?

ANSW. The power of *dominion* is a *regal* power; there sin is king: but the power of *prevalency* is a *tyrannical* power; there it is only a tyrant, whose authority is rejected. The power of *dominion* is a *monarchical* power, where sin rules alone; but the power of *prevalency* only is where another power is also; there are two armies on the field. The power of *dominion* is *uncontroulable*, the man sins without controul; but the power of *prevalency* is a *resisted* power, where it meets with resistance unto blood. The power of *dominion* is an *absolute* power; but the power of *prevalency* is a *limited* one, with respect to some particulars only. The power of *dominion* is a *habitual* power; but the power of *prevalency* is *occasional* only. And, in a word, the power of *dominion* is an *intire* power; but the power of *prevalency* is a *broken* power, the head of it is broken, and the back of it is broken, though it prevail.—Now, to find the prevalency of the enemy, is not inconsistent with the believer's militant state, which supposes manifold inroads and incursions of the Canaanites upon him. And, indeed, they are not capable to find the joy of the victory, who

never feel the ſtrength of the battle: ſin reigns in the wicked, and hath too peacable dominion with them; iniquity cannot be ſaid to prevail againſt them, but rather it prevails with them; it goes well enough with them, before and after their ſinning. But, Oh! ſays David and the believer, *Iniquity prevails againſt me;* it is againſt my heart, againſt my will, againſt my deſire, againſt my deſign, againſt my reſolution, againſt my hope, againſt my faith, againſt my tears, againſt my prayers.

6. If you be ſoldiers on your march to the heavenly Canaan, then I would aſk, Whether or not you find the *power* of the glorious Captain as neceſſary for your deliverance, upon every new aſſault of the enemy, as ever you found it before? For true Iſraelites, fighting their way to heaven, find more and more evidences of their own utter inſufficiency, and more and more need of grace's all-ſufficiency. Oh! the nations are as ſtrong as ever, and the need of powerful ſuccours and auxiliaries from heaven as great as ever. This is plain alſo from the text; it is the *Lord thy God* that begins the battle; and the *Lord thy God* that carries on the extirpation of the Canaanites. Do you find, then, as much need of his power to excite grace, as to work it at firſt; as much need of his fencing the rear, as of his leading the van?—This mark excludes all theſe that have a *power in their own hand*, and never came out of themſelves, both for righteouſneſs and ſtrength, in to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: but it is encouraging to theſe who are ſaying, in the exerciſe of faith, *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, and his only.* O to be clothed with his righteouſneſs, and girded with his ſtrength, is the great deſire of all true Iſraelites!

7. If you be ſoldiers on march to the heavenly Canaan, you may try it by this, you will not only be perfectly at a point in this matter, that the battle is the Lord's, and that without him you cannot give *one fair ſtroak to the enemy;* but alſo you will find to your experience, that, by little and little, the conqueſt is carried on, and the Canaanites driven out; and that help and aſſiſt-

assistance comes from heaven by degrees, as the sovereign General is pleased to order: though you get not all the great things you would be at, yet by little things you are carried through. Can you not say, believer, that such a place was a little BOCHIM, where you got leave to weep out your heart before the Lord, because of the prevalency of sin; and such a place was a little BETHEL, a house of God, where you had such a measure of divine presence, as strengthened you against the enemy; such another place was a little PENIEL, where you saw God face to face, as it were, and a sight of the Captain of salvation gave the nations of hell a dash? And though, in the interval, your enemies and lusts rise up again in fury, and rage against you, like to devour your soul, to devour your graces, to devour your comforts, and to devour your peace; yet there comes another little recruit from heaven, that gives you a new occasion to set up an EBENEZER, saying, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped;* and to sing with the church, Psal. cxxix. 1, 2. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say; many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, yet have they not prevailed against me.* Many a time have these Canaanites vexed me, and foiled me, yet they have not prevailed to my utter overthrow; for still, when I was brought to an extremity, the Lord was a little sanctuary to me, and communicated his grace by little and little to me, in a suitableness to my need; allowing me here a little crumb of comfort, when I was like to faint in battle; and there a little crumb of courage, when I was like to yield; and at another time a little crumb of wonderful deliverance out of the hands of mine enemies, after I was led captive by them. Why, what is the meaning of all this? It is *the Lord thy God driving out these nations before thee, by little and little.*

Use 4. The *fourth* and last use shall be in a short *address* to two sorts of persons here. 1. To these that are *at peace* with the nations that stand betwixt them and the possession of the heavenly Canaan, and so are at *war* with heaven. 2. To these that are *making war* with the nations,

nations, and before whom the Lord hath begun to drive out the nations by little and little.

1*ſt*, To you that are *at peace* with the nations of hell, at peace with the devil, at peace with your luſts; I would ſpeak a word to you, 1. By way of *conviction*. 2. By way of *counſel*.

1. For your *conviction*. Is it not evident, that the moſt part are at peace with hell, being ignorant of the ſin-mortifying principles of the goſpel, being ſlighters of the means of converſion, living in ſecurity under all the calls of heaven by the word and the rod, and living in enmity againſt the power of godlineſs, indulging themſelves in many known ſins, and knowing no reſtraint from ſinning, taken from its nature, but from its conſequents only. Are there not many here, that have nations of luſts ſwarming in their heart, yet were never convinced of, or made to know the plagues of their own heart? Some will ſay they have a good heart to God, even though their mouth be filled either with curſing, lying, ſwearing, and ſlandering; or elſe with nothing but vain, frothy, carnal, worldly diſcourſe. What! ſhall we think you have a clean heart, when you have ſuch a foul mouth? Does not Chriſt ſay, *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh?* When a man ſees abundance of ſmoke coming out at the tope of a chimney, he may ſay, for certain, that is a ſign of much fire in the hearth: ſo, when there is nothing but vain, worldly words in the mouth; we may ſay, there is much vanity and corruption in the heart. Carnal lips that are not ſhaped for any ſpiritual diſcourſe, except in hypocriſy and deceit, diſcover a carnal heart. Oh! how many here are willing ſlaves to the nations, the Canaanites, the luſts of the fleſh! Of all ſlaves, they are in the worſt caſe that are ſold; of theſe that are ſold, they are in the worſt caſe that are put in priſon; of theſe that are in priſon, they are in the worſt caſe that are bound and chained in priſon: yet ſuch ſlaves to ſin and luſts are all here by nature, ſhut up in cloſs priſon, bound and chained there; ſhut up under unbelief: and unbelief is ſuch a cruel jailor, that, while you are ſhut up under it, it will not ſo much as ſuffer you to lift up

your

your head, or to look up to heaven for deliverance. Oh! how miſerable is this thraldom that you are under! For theſe nations that rule in you, and over you, and under which you are bearing arms againſt the God of heaven, will, at laſt, deſtroy you for ever, if they be not deſtroyed in time; if they be not put out of your heart, they will keep you out of heaven; yea, if they be not driven out of your heart, they will drive you to hell. If that legion of luſts, that you are in league with, be not caſt out of your heart, by the power of that glorious Captain of ſalvation, that caſt out a legion of devils out of one man; then you muſt lay your account with it, that, like the ſwine poſſeſſed of the devil, you will be driven down to the ſea of God's everlaſting wrath, and drowned in perdition. But then,

2. I would offer you a word of *counſel*. O will you break league with theſe curſed Canaanites, and come and take on with our glorious Captain of ſalvation, that can drive them out before you? O ſinner! man, woman; young and old; you that have been a ſlave to the devil all your days, a ſlave to the numerous nations of luſts, that, as ſure as God lives, will keep you out of heaven, and drive you to hell, if they be not driven out; will you come and take on with our glorious Lord Jeſus, whoſe office and work, as a Redeemer, is to force out the nations before you? Our Captain-general hath ſent us, as officers under him, to cry in the public meetings and aſſemblies of this ſort, ſaying, *Whoſoever will, let him come*, and take on to be a ſoldier under the KING of kings, and LORD of lords, againſt the king of hell and the nations of luſts, that would keep you out of heaven: and as we are warranted to declare them curſed with bitter curſes, that will not join in this war, according to what is ſaid of Meroz, Judges v. 23. *Curſe ye Meroz; curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty:* ſo we are warranted to declare to ſinners, that there are here the greateſt encouragements that ever were offered to ſoldiers, to excite you to take on with him. Why, he offers you money to bear all your charges; *I counſel you to buy of me gold,*

tried

tried gold: he offers to *take off your filthy garments, and to clothe you with change of raiment*, the king's livery: yea, he offers you a coat of mail, that will defend you againſt the ſhot of death, and the ſhot of devils; the robe of his own righteouſneſs, a garment of ſalvation: he offers you further, that, if you be wounded in the war, he will give you a balm to heal your wound, the balm of his own blood: yea, if you take on with him, he offers to do all your works in you and for you; yea, to fight all your battles, to drive out all the nations before you, and then to crown you as a conqueror; yea, and more than a conqueror, even though you have done nothing of yourſelf. He offers to give you all the armour you need for the war: do you need the *ſword*, the *breaſt-plate*, the *helmet*, the *ſhield*, mentioned, Eph. vi. He himſelf is the great magazine of all the military proviſion; and therefore, if you take on with him, you ſhall want for nothing that is neceſſary for carrying on the war to a complete victory. O come and take on with him for *wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption;* take on with him for armour, and ſtrength, and victory, and all.

But, ſay you, what mean you by taking on with him? I know not how to take on with him. Why, Sirs, to take on with him, is to *believe in him.* But what am I to believe, ſay you, that I may take on with him?

(1.) You are to believe, that he is *ſpeaking* to you, and *inviting* you to take on with him; even you man, you woman. Let none here ſay that there was not a word ſpoken to them at Carnock: nay, I take you all to witneſs, that have ears to hear, that the Lord is, by the poor mortal that is here preaching, ſpeaking to every one of you, and ſaying, *To you, O man, do I call, and my voice is to the ſons of men;* and he is entreating you to take on with him. Believe that he is ſpeaking to you, and that this goſpel-offer is to you.

(2.) You are to believe that you *cannot believe.* This were one good ſtep towards faith, to believe that you are an unbeliever, and ſhut up in unbelief as in a priſon, which

which none can open but the Captain of ſalvation. And therefore,

(3.) You are to believe in him for *grace* to believe in him, or to come to him for grace to come to him, and to take on with him for faith, as well as for other things, becauſe he alone is the *Author of faith*. He never called any to bear the expence of one jot, from the beginning to the end of the war, out of their own pocket; and much leſs the expence of this great thing we call *believing*, which is the effect of the *exceeding greatneſs of his almighty power*. And then, having believed theſe things,

(4.) You are to believe his word, that he will not *fail you* in a jot of what he is offering to you. Take his word for it that he will do as he hath ſaid unto you; and truſt him that ſpeaks to you by us. To take on with him by faith, is to take his word, who is *truth itſelf*, for your ſecurity; and lay the ſtreſs of the whole war upon him, ſaying, Lord, art thou calling me, even me, that have been a ſlave to the devil and nations of luſts? Art thou calling me to take on with thee? Content, Lord; *Come thou and reign over us*, as the trees ſaid, in Jotham's parable, Judges ix. 10. Come thou and reign over me, and be thou my glorious Captain, to fight for me, and to ſlay all the nations of luſts in my heart. And if you, indeed, take on with him in this manner, he will do as he hath ſaid; he will put out the nations before you by *little and little*.—May the Lord back his call with power.

2*dly*, To you that are *believers*, on the field of battle, *making war* with the nations, the ſpiritual Canaanites; and before whom the Lord hath begun to drive them out by little and little: I ſhould offer you, 1. A word of *comfort*. 2. Of *counſel*.

[1.] For *comfort*. O believer though the nations be greater and mighter than you, yet the Lord hath engaged to drive them out; there is a power in Chriſt, the believer's Head and Huſband, that will, in proceſs of time, bring every power contrary to him in ſubjection; it is in Chriſt that believers ſhall be *more than conquerors*. It is very grievous to the believer to feel the aſſaults of

ſin, ſuch as that of pride, filthineſs, covetouſneſs, unbelief, atheiſm, and enmity: but it is the privilege of the believer, that he hath ſuch things that he may be humbled, not that he may be conquered and deſtroyed thereby. You know, a ſnake may be ſo handled, by taking out his ſting and teeth, that it cannot hurt us, though it touch us; yet we abhor it for the nature of it, and are afraid to have it come near us: even ſo, ſin is in ſuch a manner handled by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that it cannot hurt the believer in Chriſt; hence the believer is many times more afraid than hurt: yet it is very becoming the true believer to hate ſin from the very nature of it, and ſtand at a diſtance from it. Mean time, you have the greateſt encouragement in the world to fight againſt the nations of enemies, the nations of luſts; for the battle is the Lord's, he ſtands engaged to put out the nations, Deut. vii. 17, 18. Were there an uncertainty of the victory, you might be diſcouraged and loath to undertake ſuch a warfare. But now, when the Lord hath aſſured you of the victory, and that you have his blood, his Spirit, his faithful promiſe for it, there is no more ground of diſcouragement.

OBJECT. *Oh! what comfort can I take, when I find the nations of enemies and luſts ſtill living and lively; yea, ſtrong, mighty, and prevalent, and even growing ſtronger and ſtronger upon my hand, inſtead of being ſubdued and deſtroyed?*

ANSW. Perhaps it is ſo between battles, or ſingle combats, that you have with your corruptions; but do you not find your Captain coming ſometimes in to your aſſiſtance, and making up all that you loſt, by his gracious, powerful, ſanctifying, and comforting preſence? And thus, do you not find even after ſin's victory over you, which makes you judge the nations are increaſing on your hand; do you not find, I ſay, your hatred of ſin increaſed, your ſelf-abhorrence increaſed, your dependence on the Lord for ſtrength increaſed, your deſire to be rid of ſin increaſed, and your heart-longing for the final victory over the nations, and the full poſſeſſion of Canaan? Why, what is this but the Lord your God putting out the nations before you by little

and

and little? Mean time, during these battles, is it not ground of comfort,

(1.) That there is a *sentence past in your favours* against the nations, even a sentence of condemnation and destruction? and accordingly, *sin is condemned in the flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. And Satan is condemned to destruction; *The God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet.*

(2.) Is it not ground of comfort, that the sentence past against sin and Satan is *executed in part?* Your old man is crucified; the head of the serpent is bruised: *For this cause was the Son of God manifested, to destroy the works of the devil;* and, *by death he hath destroyed him that had the power of death.*

(3.) Is it not ground of comfort, that the *day of full and final execution is at hand*, wherein he will take vengeance on the nations? *For the day of vengeance is in mine heart; the year of my redeemed is come*, Isa. lxiii. 4.: *the day of the Lord is at hand*, wherein he will *bring forth judgment into victory, and death shall be swallowed up in victory:* Christ will *reign till all his enemies become his footstool; to him every knee shall bow.*

[4.] Is it not ground of comfort, that the *remaining power* of the nations in the interim shall never be able to *break the relation* that is betwixt your Captain-general and you, nor to cast you out of his covenant, out of his heart, nor out of his love? *My covenant will I not break*, says he; *my loving-kindness will I not take away*, Psal. lxxxix. 33, 34. He is still *the Lord thy God;* and, therefore, *he will put out the nations before thee by little and little.* I offer you,

[2.] A word of *counsel.* O believer, are you indeed enaged in battle against the nations? And has the Lord begun to drive them out before you? Then *pursue thy victory*, and *fight out the good fight of faith*, for the Lord thy God is he that does fight for thee; as the apostle says in a like case, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out the work of your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure:* Even so, fight out the battle against the nations;

for, *the Lord thy God will put them out before thee, by little and little.* And, ſince the *battle is the Lord's*, and your Captain goes before you to *divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*, go on courageouſly: and, that you may do ſo the more ſucceſsfully, I ſhall branch forth this word of counſel in theſe particulars.

1. *Put on the whole armour of God;* and go not forth againſt the nations in your own ſtrength, otherwiſe you will find them too hard for you; but, *Go on in the ſtrength of the Lord, making mention of his righteouſneſs, and his only;* being *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;* and *ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus; having no confidence in the fleſh,* but always your confidence in, and dependence upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Captain of ſalvation.

2. *Search out the nations* that are moſt inviſible and hidden; for your greateſt danger is from your moſt ſecret enemies: you *wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes.* And there are ſpiritual luſts not eaſily diſcerned: if theſe be neglected, and more open enemies only noticed, it is as if one ſhould gaze upon the ſmoke, and neglect the fire that is within; or, as if one ſhould gaze upon the ulcer, but never conſider the corrupt humour within.

3. Having found out the enemy, and diſcerned where the ſtrength of the nations lie, then *ſet upon them*, and endeavour, through grace, to bring them into a conſumption, and that both by *ſtarving* and *ſtorming* of them.

(1.) By *ſtarving* them. O ſtarve them, and keep them from their food; *Make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof.* Beware of every thing that may contribute to ſtrengthen the nations. *Say not, A confederacy* with them: do not ſpare them, nor let their ſtrong holds ſtand: draw not up a league with them, nor border too near to them. It is ſaid of Iſrael, *The people ſhall dwell alone, and ſhall not be reckoned among the nations.* Keep not company with the wicked: be not too much converſant with the world; many bury themſelves, by digging too deep there.

(2.) As

(2.) As by *ſtarving*, ſo by *ſtorming* the nations. You are to conſume them; and you ought to ſtorm them, by bringing them under the battering engines of the goſpel, under the ſtroak of God's word, which is the *ſword of the Spirit*; under the ſtroak of the blood of Chriſt; for, we *overcome by the blood of the Lamb*; and under the ſtroak of the Spirit of Chriſt; for, *If you, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, you ſhall live.*

4. Take all the *advantages you can againſt the nations.* Take advantage of the times and ſeaſons, even when you are like to be overpowered with inward corruption, and under fear of falling one day by the hand of ſome ſtrong luſt; then get to the mighty power of Chriſt, and reinforce yourſelf and reſiſt; and, in reſiſting, believe you ſhall overcome: remembering, for your encouragement, that the almighty Captain ſtands within ſight, when you are fighting in the valley; and he waits but a call from you, when diſtreſt in the battle; and he will come for your reſcue. Jehoſhaphat cried in the midſt of the battle, and was helped: how much more may you expect his aid in your ſpiritual combat?

5. *Watch againſt the nations*, and *reſiſt the firſt onſet of the enemy.* Corruptions are the natives, and they are not wholly deſtroyed: if therefore you do not watch, nature will turn to her old bias. Native and natural inclinations are very forcible: as, bend the bough of a tree downward, if you let it go, it will ſtart up by and by; ſo, if you give up your watch, the nations will return, and reſume their power. Particularly watch againſt, and reſiſt the firſt motions of ſin: if you ſtop not the current of a wicked motion, it will ſoon land in a wicked action; for, *When luſt hath conceived, it brings forth ſin*, James i. 15. Great evils ariſe from ſmall beginnings: one ſpoonful of water will quench that fire, which afterwards whole buckets cannot abate; therefore it is a good rule, *Principiis obſta*, "Reſiſt the be-"ginnings of ſin."

6. *Put the nations in the hand of the Captain*, that he may deſtroy them; and endeavour ſo to do, in the daily exerciſe of faith and prayer. O ſeek to the Lord Jeſus, that

that he would avenge you of theſe Philiſtines; as in the parable of the unjuſt judge, Luke xviii. 1,—8. The *parable* was put forth *for this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* The judge there mentioned was one that *feared not God, nor regarded man:* a widow comes to him ſaying, *Avenge me of mine adverſary;* and through her importunity ſhe prevailed with him: *And ſhall not God avenge his elect, that cry day and night to him; though he bear long, yet he will avenge them ſpeedily.* Therefore, go to a God in Chriſt, and cry, Lord, avenge me of my luſts, avenge me of my pride, avenge me of my unbelief, avenge me of my carnality, avenge me of mine enemies.

7. After all, *reſt not ſatisfied with any ſmall victory obtained over the nations:* ſit not down, as if you had no more ado; for the nations are not all dead and deſtroyed at once; you will have them to fight with, as long as you are on this ſide of heaven: enemies will up again; and, therefore, you muſt up again, and preſs forward to a complete victory. As the body of ſin and death remains while you are here; ſo, whatever particular luſt you have been troubled with, you cannot expect a full and final victory while here, even though it hath been a mortified luſt, a ſubdued luſt. No doubt, Peter got his feet upon the neck of his ſin of *denying his Maſter*, when he *went out and wept bitterly* after Chriſt looked to him; yet even that ſame corruption afterwards did ſtir in him, by a partial denying of his Maſter, though not in the ſame degree; as when Paul *withſtood him to the face*, Gal. ii. 12. A particular corruption may, through grace, be ſubdued, and it may ceaſe to ſtir ſo violently for a time; yet you cannot ſay that it is wholly killed; yea, it may afterwards riſe up as violently as ever. A luſt, that lay long dead, may revive again; and therefore you little need to be ſecure, but much need to be ſober and watchful, and ſtill going on in the warfare, ſtill depending on the Lord for new ſupplies of ſtrength againſt new aſſaults. After one victory obtained, make ready for battle immediately; when ſomething is done, look to the Lord to do more: after one ſtroak, ſeek another to be given; for it is by *little*

and

and little the victory is obtained. Think not ſtrange, therefore, though the nations rally their forces again and again, and be not diſcouraged thereupon, but learn a daily, momentany, cloſe, and conſtant dependence upon the Captain of ſalvation, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that *through him* you may *do valiantly. It is he that girdeth you with ſtrength, and ſubdues the nations under you.*

8. In order to purſue the nations to death, *purſue the claim you have to the victory over them*, in the uſe of all appointed means, with an entire dependence upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; not depending upon means; nay, nor yet depending upon ſenſible manifeſtations, nor relying even upon the graces of the Spirit, but upon the God of all grace; pleading your right and claim, by virtue of the divine promiſe, ſaying, Lord, haſt thou not interpoſed thy faithfulneſs, thy word, thy oath? and is not thy promiſe ſealed; ſealed by the blood of Chriſt, ſealed in the ſacrament of the ſupper? Haſt thou not ſaid, *Solomon ſhall reign?* though *now, behold, Adonijah uſurps the throne:* Haſt thou not ſaid, Grace ſhall reign, and *ſin ſhall not have the dominion?* Behold how it uſurps. Well, put him to his word, and purſue your claim. Surely the Lord will not deny himſelf; nay, JEHOVAH-JIREH, *In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen:* though you have no ſtrength, *no might againſt this great multitude;* yet, let your *eyes be toward him*, who is *mightier than the noiſe of many waters*, and who hath wrapt in your intereſt with his own glory, his own faithfulneſs, and truth. Let your difficulties be never ſo great, your enemies never ſo many, and their power never ſo invincible; it is not you they have to do with, but Chriſt: and, can any thing be too hard for him? *Wait on thy God continually*, who hath here promiſed to accompliſh the warfare gradually: *The Lord thy God will put out theſe nations, before thee, by little and little.*

SERM-

SERMON LIV.

The FEMALE PREACHER; or, the Woman of *Samaria's* Sermon to the Men of the City: or, the *Self-humbling and Chriſt-exalting Influences of Divine Diſcoveries.* *

JOHN iv. 29.

Come ſee a man which told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?

IF our glorious Lord Jeſus has been here preſent this day, converſing with us as he did with the woman of Samaria, diſcovering us to ourſelves, and diſcovering himſelf to us; if he hath been telling us what vile ſinners we are, and what a glorious Saviour he is, ſo as *the entrance of his word hath given light to us*, to ſee our blackneſs on the one ſide, and his beauty on the other: ſurely it cannot but lead us to ſome ſuch ſelf-condemnation and Chriſt-commending exerciſe, as here this woman is employed in: *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Chriſt?*

In the preceeding part of this chapter, there ſtands recorded a very notable converſation betwixt Chriſt and this woman, the particulars whereof are too many to be conſidered at this time, though ſome of them may fall in our way when we ſpeak of the circumſtances of her converſion: only, in the general, our Lord Jeſus, as a

* This ſubject was handled in one ſermon, preached July 13th, 1729. immediately after the celebration of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper at Dunfermline. It hath undergone ſix editions.

wearied

wearied traveller ſitting down by Jacob's well, and this woman coming to draw water, he ſeeks a drink from her, both to quench his thirſt, and to take occaſion of conferring with her, with a deſign of mercy to her ſoul. She apprehending him to be a Jew, refuſes to give him a drink, upon an old quarrel that was between the Jews and the Samaritans; whereupon Chriſt ſhews her how ſhe miſtook her own mercy, and that he had better water to give her than that which ſhe refuſed to give him, ver 10.; and that if ſhe knew what a valuable mercy were at her hand, ſhe would have turned a ſupplicant to him, and not ſuffer him to be ſo to her. But ſhe ſtill reaſoning againſt his offer, he points out further the excellency of what he offered, ver. 13, 14.; this raiſed ſome natural deſire in her: but our Lord reſolving to take hold of her heart, and knowing that the richeſt offer of his grace in the world, will work no deſire in the heart of ſinners, further than what is natural and carnal, unleſs he effectively convince them of their ſin and miſery, and ſavingly manifeſt himſelf to them; therefore he takes this method with her.

1*ſt*, He *convinces* her of her ſin and miſery, and lets her underſtand that he knew all the lewdeneſs and wickedneſs ſhe was guilty of, by ſhewing her how many adulteries ſhe was chargeable with, ver. 18. Whereupon ſhe begins to conceive ſome high opinion of him as a Prophet, and to ſeek further light from him with reference to the right way of worſhipping God, there being controverſies about religious matters, and particularly about the place of public worſhip, betwixt the Jews and the Samaritans: and, indeed, the woman's diſcourſe here ſhews, that though ſhe was a profane Samaritan, yet ſhe was no *Ignoramus*. She had knowledge of the controverſy of the day ſhe lived in, and the grounds thereof; and knew that the Meſſias was to come: yet her knowledge was no ſanctified knowledge. But now her conſcience being awakened with a ſenſe of ſin, ſhe is ſolicitous to have her mind informed; and accordingly is inſtructed at large by our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, both concerning the *place* and the *right manner* of worſhipping

God. And thus from one thing to another, he leads her on, until,

2*dly*, He *manifeſts* himſelf to her, ver. 26. Chriſt's diſcourſe about the change of religion that was to take place, brought the woman to mind of the Meſſias's coming; *I know*, ſays ſhe, *that Meſſias cometh, which is called Chriſt; when he is come, he will tell us all things.* And while ſhe is expreſſing her high eſtimation of, and great deſire after this coming Meſſias, Jeſus ſaith unto her, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* Chriſt may be preſent with people, and ſpeaking to them, and yet they cannot know, or take him up till he reveals himſelf, as here he did to this woman; *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.*

No ſooner did Chriſt thus kindly diſcover himſelf to her, than immediately this ſweet conference is broken up, by the return of the diſciples, who had *gone to the city to buy meat*, ver. 8. The ſweeteſt fellowſhip with Chriſt on earth is but of ſhort duration; and the moſt pleaſant manifeſtations may meet with very ſudden interruptions; and poor ſinners may have ſuch a ſweet time in Chriſt's company, that even the company of diſciples may be an interruption to it.

But now, how ſhe was affected with this diſcovery is evident from two things.

1. She *forgets her errand* that ſhe came upon; *She left her water-pot, and went her way:* having got a taſte of the excellency of Chriſt, and a drink of the living water which he gave her, ſhe minds no other water now; nay, ſhe forgets all other things that before were in great eſteem with her.

2. She *ſpreads the name* and *fame of Chriſt* in the place where ſhe dwelt; *Come ſee a man*, ſays ſhe, *that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Chriſt?* Wherein we may notice,

(1.) An *invitation; Come ſee a man:* having got a taſte of his goodneſs, ſhe would have the men in the city to taſte and ſee with her.

(2.) A *commendation;* a man *that told me* ALL THINGS *that ever I did;* a man that hath diſcovered himſelf to be God as well as man, in that he hath ript up and ran-

ſacked

ſacked my heart and life. He had diſcovered her lewdneſs to her, and thereby repreſented all other things to her as ſeen by him. There is here implied a humble ſenſe ſhe had of her ſinfulneſs, which Chriſt had given her a diſcovery and conviction of; and by his ſearching word ſhe underſtood that he was the ſearcher of hearts and ſo commends him as *a man that told her all things that ever ſhe did.*

(3.) A *concluſion*, by way of interrogation and expoſtulation, *Is not this the Chriſt?* importing no manner of doubt about it in her own breaſt, but a ſtrong affirmation, pointing at him unto them. He had told her what ſhe was, and in this glaſs ſhe ſaw her own vileneſs; and he had told her what he was, and in this glaſs ſhe ſaw his glory: and by both theſe means he diſcovered himſelf to be the true Meſſias, the God-man, the promiſed *Immanuel, God with us;* and her heart being full of Chriſt, and overflowing with the living water of the Spirit that he had given her, it vented itſelf and ran over in his praiſe and commendation unto others; *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Chriſt?*——I ſhall endeavour ſome further explication of this text, upon a note of doctrine, paſſing over many others. What I mainly fixt upon is,

OBSERV. *That thoſe ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt, that make perſons to condemn and abaſe themſelves to the loweſt, lead them, at the ſame time, to commend and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt.*

Self-ſearching, ſoul-humbling, and ſin-diſcovering manifeſtations, iſſue in Chriſt-exalting commendations. I think it is remarkable in this woman, that kindly humiliation did not take place in her, till after that Chriſt had clearly manifeſted himſelf to her, ſaying, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* It is true, when Chriſt firſt diſcovered her wickedneſs and lewdneſs to her, ſhe appeared to be ſelf-condemned and convicted, ſaying, *I perceive that thou art a Prophet;* and a true Prophet indeed, that can tell me how many acts of lewdneſs I have been guilty of: her conſcience lying in her face, and ſubſcribing to the truth of what he had told her; but yet, as

her firſt conviction appeared to be very partial and weak, in that, as ſome think, ſhe ſeemed to ſhift any diſcourſe about her own vileneſs, and ſtarted a queſtion relative to a national difference betwixt the Jews and the Samaritans, to divert that ſubject concerning her baſeneſs; ſo, I think, we may conclude, that her convictions before were very legal, driving her rather to her works and duties than to Chriſt; for, inſtantly ſhe falls a queſtioning him about the means of worſhipping God, as if when now ſhe was convinced of her ſin againſt God, her only way of obtaining his favour, was by endeavouring to pleaſe him by her duties of worſhip, whom ſhe had diſpleaſed by her wickedneſs and lewdneſs. And, indeed, the firſt airth that an awakened conſcience looks to, is the law, *the firſt Huſband*. But now, when once Chriſt diſcovers and manifeſts himſelf to her, ſhe is kindly humbled under a ſenſe of her vileneſs; yea, and of all her heart and life-wickedneſs repreſented to her under that; and in the light wherein Chriſt diſcovered himſelf, ſhe ſaw all her abominations; *He told me all things that ever I did*. She is now humbled and abaſed to the leweſt; why? her ſenſe of ſin is not now partial, but full; *He told me all things that ever I did*. Neither is it now legal but evangelical; for it was now in the glaſs of a ſaving manifeſtation, in the glaſs wherein Chriſt diſcovered his glory and excellency that ſhe ſaw all her own filthineſs and deformity.—And while ſhe is thus debaſed and humbled by the diſcovery of Chriſt, how does ſhe commend and exalt him to the higheſt? She commends him to her neighbour-citizens, and puts the greateſt honour upon him, both as he is the true God incarnate, that by his omniſcient eye could ſee, and ſo declare to her, *All that ever ſhe did*; and as he is the true Meſſias, the anointed of God; *Is not this the Chriſt?*

The truth of this doctrine might be cleared from many ſcripture paſſages, *That ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt tend to make perſons condemn and debaſe themſelves, and to commend and exalt Chriſt*, as it was with Job, chap. xl. ver. 4, 5. God having manifeſted his glory, he cried out, *Behold I am vile; what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will*

lay

lay my hand upon my mouth; as being unworthy to ſpeak in the preſence of ſuch a great and glorious one: therefore he adds, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.* And chap. xlii. 5, 6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes ſeeth thee: wherefore, I abhore myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* See how the diſcovery of Chriſt makes the prophet Iſaiah to condemn and abaſe himſelf to the loweſt, and to commend and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt, chap vi. 1, 5. He *ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple*; then ſays he, *Wo is me, for I am undone! becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts.* To this purpoſe we may ſee Iſa. xlv. 22,—25. *Look unto me and be ſaved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe.* Well, what will iſſue upon that ſaving ſight of Chriſt? Both the abaſing of himſelf, ver. 23. *To him every knee ſhall bow*; and the high commendation and exaltation of Chriſt, *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: in him ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory*, ver. 24, 25.——But paſſing many other proofs, I ſuppoſe it will be found evident in the experience of all the ſaints, that every manifeſtation and diſcovery of Chriſt tends to work both theſe effects at the ſame time, even to make them condemn and debaſe themſelves to the loweſt, and to commend and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt.

This ſubject is very large, but I deſign, for ſhortening the work, to confine myſelf eſpecially to the circumſtances and effects of the diſcovery that Chriſt here gives of himſelf to the woman of Samaria, in the following method.

I. I ſhall ſhow what we are to underſtand by Chriſt *manifeſting* or *diſcovering* himſelf to a perſon.

II. What are theſe *ſin-diſcovering* and *ſoul-debaſing* effects of Chriſt manifeſting himſelf; or, when may one be in caſe to ſay, that Chriſt hath *told him all things that ever he did?*

III. What

III. What are these *Christ-exalting commendations*, wherein such discoveries of Christ vent themselves; and so notice the particular *import* in what the woman here says, *Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?*

IV. I will shew the *reasons* of the doctrine, whence it is that saving discoveries of Christ have such a self-debasing and Christ-exalting influence. And then,

V. Make *application* of the whole subject.

I. I will speak a little of *Christ's discovering* and *manifesting* himself to sinners. And here I would confine myself to the circumstances of the discovery that he makes of himself to this woman, which wrought this effect in her, and which, in most particulars, will be found to agree with all the saving manifestations that our Lord makes of himself to his people, either at first conversion, or any renewed visit he makes to them. And here we may notice, 1. Some things relating to the *means* of the discovery that Christ makes of himself to this woman. 2. Some things relating the *manner* of it.

1*st*, There are some things in the context relating to the *means* of this discovery.

1. One of the more *remote* means was his taking occasion to *come to a place where she was also to come*, and so casting himself in her way, as it were. This is noticed very remarkably, ver. 4th of this chapter, where it is said, *He must needs go through Samaria:* Whatever other reasons there were for his going this way, here was a special one; he must needs meet this woman, and with those Samaritans, whom, on this occasion, he converted to the faith. If there be but one soul that Christ hath an errand to, the world will not keep him away from the place where that soul is. He must needs go through that place: there is a sweet necessity he lies under; he must needs bring a gospel-ministry there; he must needs bring gospel-ordinances where he has any souls to meet with, and discover himself savingly unto. They to whom Christ hath discovered himself will find

a mer-

a merciful providence exerciſed about them, in his ordering there lot ſo, that either they are brought to the place where Chriſt and his ordinances are, or Chriſt and his ordinances come to the place where they are.

2. A *ſecond* more remote means of this diſcovery is our Lord ordering matters ſo as her *ſecular errand* is made the occaſion of her *ſpiritual good* and advantage, ver. 7. *There comes this woman of Samaria to draw water.* Providence may be intending much mercy to thoſe who are both very unworthy of it, and very unconcerned about it. Little was this ſinful woman minding any other thing but to draw water; yet a happy providence made her to meet with the Saviour of ſinners. Some have come to ordinances, as this woman did to Jacob's well, with no other view, ſave upon ſome ſecular and carnal errand; may be to draw the water of damnation to themſelves, or to draw in ſome applauſe to themſelves amongſt their neighbours, or merely from cuſtom and curioſity, little minding any ſaving good, which yet the Lord hath prevented them with.

3. A *third* mean of this diſcovery is, Chriſt falls a *diſcourſing with her*, and upon occaſion of his ſeeking, and her refuſing him a drink of water, he ſhews his pity and compaſſion on her, as an ignorant and unſenſible ſinner, having no knowledge of her real want and neceſſity, with reſpect to that *better water which he had to give;* and particularly he lets her know, that the *well of living water* was in his hand to diſpenſe as he pleaſed; and that as he offers his grace before we aſk it, ſo he will not refuſe it to them who aſk it upon his offer and promiſe: *If thou hadſt known thou wouldſt have aſked, and I would have given thee living water.* And, beſides, in his diſcourſe, he commends his wares to her, ver. 14.; his gifts, his graces, his Spirit, as a well above all wells, *a well of water ſpringing up to everlaſting life;* and all to be freely diſpenſed by way of gift and donation. And this is the way he deals ſtill with ſinners in the free diſpenſation of the goſpel.

4. A *fourth* mean of this diſcovery, is his working a *work of conviction* upon her conſcience, by ſhewing her tranſgreſſions to her, and ſetting her ſin in order before her,

her, ver. 18.; and thereby discovering his prophetical office to her, and raising some esteem of him as a *Prophet*, ver. 19. The freest offers do not prevail with sinners, till they be convinced of their sinfulness and misery. Indeed, it is not every sight of sin that will convince the sinner; but Christ must set it home upon the conscience, and discover sin to them marked by his all-seeing eye, his all-searching eye; for the woman knew pretty well, how matters were with her, and yet, without any due sense, till he ript up and laid open her bosom, and made her see and understand that all her sins were *naked and open unto the eye of him with whom she had now to do*; and though she did not know him to be the Christ, yet she begins to have some high thought of him as a Prophet that had the mind of God, and by whom God was discovering her sinfulness to her. But it does not appear, as yet, that she perceived any thing in him above ordinary prophets; so gradually, by little and little, did he manifest himself to her. Only it is evident here, that in God's order and method of working effectually on the hearts of sinners, as there is a discovery of sin that goes before a discovery of Christ, without which persons do not see their need of Christ; so the more that Christ discovers sin, and touches the sinner's heart therewith, it breeds the more respect and estimation of him, though it may be very weak and low at first.

5. A *fifth* mean of this discovery, is his opening up to her the nature of *true spiritual* and *acceptable worship*, ver. 21,—24. Here he gives her such instruction as might tend to let her see that he was a Prophet above all prophets, that knew what changes were quickly to fall out with reference to the place of religious worship, and what sort of worship God would have, what a Spirit he is, and what service he requires. As *faith comes by hearing*, so discoveries of Christ, the glorious object of faith, come by the means of instruction and divine teaching, such as the Lord Jesus here gives this woman. And this paves way to

6. A *sixth* mean of this discovery, namely, his working in her heart a *kindly remembrance* of and *high esteem*

for

for the Meſſias, ver. 25. The longer ſhe converſed with Chriſt, ſhe is the more enamoured with him. Though he diſclaimed the Samaritan worſhip, and declared they had no warrant for their religion; yet having, at the ſame time, ſhewed that the Jewiſh worſhip was warrantable by the word of God, though yet their *temporary way* of *worſhip* was what his coming to the *world* was to give a burial to, and to aboliſh, upon which a more *excellent way* of worſhipping God was to ſucceed; I ſay, the more ſhe hears him ſpeak, the more ſhe is enamoured with his diſcourſe, and filled with great reſpect and regard to the Meſſias, from whom ſhe expected ſuch inſtruction as that, *I know that Meſſias comes, which is called Chriſt: when he is come, he will tell us all things*; not knowing as yet that ſhe was ſpeaking to him. She is ſpeaking with a very high eſtimation of him, as the great Teacher of his church, that would fully reveal the counſel of God concerning his ſervice and means of ſalvation. And now the woman, by theſe means, being brought to have precious thoughts of Chriſt, and to give ſuch a notable evidence of her faith concerning him, then he diſcovered himſelf, ſaying, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* When people are brought to ſublime thoughts of Chriſt, then it is certain Chriſt is not far off from them.——Thus ye have the *means*. We ſhall,

2*dly*, Notice the *manner* of the diſcovery that Chriſt makes of himſelf, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* Here is a clear manifeſtation and revelation that Chriſt himſelf gives of himſelf, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* It is not ordinary for Chriſt to give ſuch teſtimony of himſelf; there muſt be ſome rare thing here: for, when John's diſciples came to aſk him, *Art thou he that ſhould come, or may we look for another?* He does not ſay, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he*; nay, but, *Go tell John what ye hear and ſee; the blind receive their ſight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, the deaf hear, the dead are raiſed up, and the poor have the goſpel preached to them*, Matth. xi. 5.; let him draw the concluſion from theſe premiſes whether I am he or not: but here he gives as clear a diſcovery of himſelf as in all the book of God,

out of his own mouth. We know Peter gave a clear teſtimony, *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God*; the Father gave a great teſtimony to him, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed*: but that Chriſt gave as clear a teſtimony of himſelf, is rarely to be found in all the New Teſtament: yea, this diſcovery of himſelf is more remarkable, becauſe he forbad his diſciples, at that time, to tell expreſly who he was; and when Pilate and Herod, and others, aſk him, *Who art thou?* he either gave them a very dark anſwer, or none at all. Chriſt is not laviſh of his commendations in this manner; therefore, there is ſome ſpeciality here: and yet there is ſomething in the manner of Chriſt manifeſting himſelf to her that is common to all the children of God, to whom he ſavingly manifeſts himſelf.

1. It was in a *word*, a home word ſpoken to her heart, that he diſcovered himſelf; *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* It was by ſpeaking to her that he manifeſted himſelf; ſo it is in the word that he diſcovers himſelf to his own; that word that comes into the ear of others, comes into their heart. The joyful ſound goes through the very ſoul of the man, in a ſecret indiſcernible manner: this is plain in the caſe of this woman, both with reſpect to the word that he ſpake for her conviction, to diſcover her ſin; and in the word that he ſpake for her conſolation, diſcovering himſelf as the Saviour. In the former he had ſaid, *I know this is not thy huſband that thou haſt*; the word went to her heart; that is a true word ſays ſhe, ſpoken by a true prophet, for I am living in whoredom. Thus God, in dealing with ſinners by his word externally, makes it have an internal ſound in the heart; he whiſpers in the ear of a ſinner, and makes him think, Alas! that is very true; I am juſt guilty of that ſin; I cannot reclaim againſt what the miniſter ſays; all is true; I muſt take with the charge of God's word. So with reſpect to the latter, when he diſcovers himſelf ſavingly, it is in the word of grace; it comes into the ear, but the finger of God ſets it down to the heart; *The God that commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, ſhines into the heart*: and it is in the glaſs of the word that this light ſhines; *beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord.*

2. It

2. It was a *particular* diſcovery; *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he;* to THEE: ſo when God, in Chriſt, diſcovers himſelf, it is a particular diſcovery; he *calls his own ſheep by name*, John x. 3. As the word of conviction is particular, ſo the word of grace is particular, as if God were dealing with none other but that perſon. O! has he ſpoken to thee, man; to thee, woman; in particular, by his word, and ſet it home upon thy heart?

3. It was an *immediate* diſcovery he himſelf made of himſelf. This indeed is not to be expected in the manner that the woman here was privileged with: but tho' it is not now in an immediate, but in a mediate way; yet where he ſavingly manifeſts himſelf, he takes the means in his own hand, and makes the ſoul find that it is none other but himſelf that is dealing with it; it is not the voice of men or miniſters, but the voice of God that it hears, 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. The word comes with ſuch light, life, and majeſty, that the ſoul finds it, is indeed, *the word of God;* it has a heavenly eccho with it. And hence,

4. It was a *clear* and *demonſtrative* diſcovery; *I am* HE, ſays Chriſt to the woman. Saving diſcoveries are by way of *demonſtration*, as the word imports, John xvi. 9. Thus he manifeſts himſelf to his people, as he does not manifeſt himſelf to the world, who remain incompaſſed and inveloped with the clouds and miſts of groſs darkneſs and ignorance, amidſt all the literal knowledge they enjoyed.

5. It was a *gradual* diſcovery, by little and little, from one ſtep to another, till he made all his glory paſs before this woman: even ſo, where he manifeſts himſelf favingly, he does it gradually; *His goings forth are prepared as the morning.* The work that is very ſudden, ſeldom proves very ſound. It is obſerved of the bad ground, that the ſeed ſown did *ſuddenly* ſpring up; God's ordinary way of manifeſting himſelf is gradual; *The path of the juſt ſhines more and more unto the perfect day.* Then,

6. It was a *ſenſible* diſcovery that he gave of himſelf to this woman; her *time was a time of love.* After he had let her ſee that ſhe was lying in her blood, and in

the puddle of pollution, and after he had filled her heart with precious thoughts of the Meſſias, the Deliverer, he would no longer hide himſelf from her. O how ſweetly and ſenſibly does he manifeſt himſelf to his people, when they are apt to think he is far from them! As this woman was ſpeaking of the Meſſias, as the glorious perſon whom ſhe knew not if ever ſhe would have the happineſs to ſee, *Behold*, ſays Chriſt, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* O! ſays the ſoul, will I ever get a ſight of Chriſt? I know not if ever I will be ſo happy; why, then uſually he lets them know he is not far off.

7. It was a *wonderful* diſcovery he made of himſelf to this woman; there were many wonders in it: and, indeed, whenever Chriſt manifeſts himſelf to any ſoul, it will ſee ſome ſuch like wonders as ſhe ſaw. O wonderful, might ſhe ſay! is he ſpeaking to me, ſuch a poor woman as I am, and ſuch a baſe woman as I have been! Why, as there was no fibneſs, or relation, betwixt him and her, but on the contrary a ſtated enmity and alienation; for, *the Jews had no dealing with the Samaritans;* yea, but he muſt deal with her, though ſhe was no good woman; nay, a common whore, lying in whoredom. O wonderful! Though ye were never ſuch a great ſinner, yet Chriſt is content to ſpeak with you, for your everlaſting good; and it is an ill tale that may not be heard. Will ye allow Chriſt to ſpeak to you? Was it not wonderful that Chriſt ſhould ſpeak to this woman, in ſuch a manner as he did? How kindly does he ſpeak to her that he might gain her heart with his love, and kill her with kindneſs? One might have thought he would call her a baſe filthy devil, as it was ſaid to himſelf moſt blaſphemouſly; *Say we not well, thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a devil?* It was true of this woman of Samaria, ſhe was a Samaritan that had a filthy devil; yea, the Jews took all the Samaritans for incarnate devils. But does Chriſt call her ſo? Nay; and it adds to the wonder of his diſcovering himſelf to her, that ſhe was a ſlighter of Chriſt, he was undervalued by her; *Art thou greater than our father Jacob?* ſays ſhe, ver. 12.; yea, ſhe refuſed him a drink of cold water; yet he bears with all theſe affronts, and manifeſts

feſts himſelf to her, even to her: O wonderful! Do not ſeveral ſuch wonders take place, when the Lord comes to ſpeak and manifeſt himſelf to you, O believers, O ſinners? Are there not wonders enough to be obſerved concerning this glorious perſon ſhewing himſelf? He might dwell in heaven to all eternity, as he dwelt in heaven from all eternity, and be for ever happy: the Father was good company to him, and he needed none of your company; he had infinite delight in himſelf more than in all his creatures: yet for all this, that he ſhould ſpeak and ſhew himſelf to you, how wonderful is it! His diſcoveries are wonderful, in that he ſeeks nothing of us: it is true, he made the faſhion of ſeeking a drink of water from this woman, but that was only by the bye; he got meat and drink enough when he got the woman to himſelf; the great thing he was ſeeking was to get the woman divorced from all her baſe huſbands, and married to himſelf; yea, betrothed to him for ever: yea, Chriſt's viſits to ſome may be wonderful, not only to the ſinner, that gets them; but to the ſaints and diſciples, that ſee or hear tell of them. We are told here, ver. 27. that *the diſciples, when they came, marvelled that he talked with that woman*: though they durſt not challenge him, yet it was matter of offence to them that he ſo freely converſed with her. Chriſt can demean himſelf, and ſtoop ſo low to a poor ſinner as is marvellous to fleſh and blood: there is more kindneſs and humility in him alone, than in all his friends; they being advanced, by grace, are apt to forget themſelves, and to become ſo proud as to deſpiſe others, though they themſelves were once lifted out of the dungeon, and choſen out of the duſt. But then,

8. It was a *powerful* diſcovery that he made of himſelf to this woman, as appears by the gracious *effects* thereof. Now her heart goes off all things elſe, ſhe *forgets her water-pot*; her mind is ſet upon ſome greater things; ſhe ran away to the city, that ſhe might invite others to follow him, who had ſo wonderfully manifeſted himſelf to her; and, indeed, all ſaving manifeſtations have a power attending them. The goſpel comes not in *word only, but in power*: Chriſt's word has a drawing power.

power. He draws with loving-kindneſs, while grace and love is poured from his lips. This word, wherein he viſits the ſoul, has a gaining power, that wins the heart from all things, and makes Chriſt *all in all.* And his manifeſtations have a ſanctifying, transforming power; *beholding his glory, we are changed into the ſame image;* and eſpecially they lead to a ſelf-debaſing and Chriſt-exalting exerciſe. Which brings me to

II. The *ſecond* general head propoſed, namely, What are theſe *ſin-diſcovering* and *ſoul-debaſing effects* of Chriſt's manifeſting himſelf? or, when may one be in caſe to ſay, *He told me all things that ever I did?* It is true, this is a part of what the woman ſpake to Chriſt's commendation, as an all-knowing God; as well as to her own condemnation, as a vile ſinner, brought under a kindly ſelf-abaſement, by the diſcovery ſhe had of Chriſt, both as a kindly reprover, and a merciful Redeemer, a Chriſt, a Saviour.—To give light to this particular, I ſhall only touch at this, how *all things are told,* when only *ſome things ſeem to be told?* How can this woman ſay, *He told me* ALL THINGS *that ever I did,* when yet it was only her *whoredom* and *adultery* that he diſcovered? Or, when may the diſcovery that Chriſt makes of himſelf be ſo humbling and abaſing, that when but a *ſmall part* is mentioned, yet ALL *that ever we did* is diſcovered?

I anſwer; 1. It may be ſaid *conſequentially: He told me all things that ever I did;* that is, by plain conſequence. As we may ſee what the concluſion is, when the premiſes are related; what the root is, when the fruit is diſcovered; and what the fountain is, when the the ſtreams are diſcovered: even ſo, when Chriſt tells a perſon what evil fruit he hath brought forth, that perſon may eaſily infer, that he hath told him that he is an evil tree; and by the ſtreams of wickedneſs in the life, he leads people thus to the fountain of wickedneſs in the heart and nature. When he tells one of the black ſmoke that comes out of the chimney of his heart; he tells alſo, by plain conſequence, that there is a fire of corruption within; and then is one abaſed to ſelf-abhorrence,

rence, when, by the discovery of one sin, in the light of a gracious manifestation, he is led, in a spiritually argumentive way, to infer his total deprivation, both in nature and practice; he may say, consequently, at least, *He told me all things that ever I did.*

2. It may be said *inclusively* and *virtually; He told me all things that ever I did.* As *he that offends in one point of the law, is guilty of all,* James ii. 10. in counteracting the authority that enjoins all; so he that is humbled deeply for any one sin, may see therein, that he hath broken all the commands of God, and may be said, in a part, to have seen the whole. In transgressing of one command he may see his being a transgressor of all the commands of God, and a continual transgressor thereof in thought, word, and deed; because, as *every imagination of the heart is evil, and only evil continually;* so, *out of the heart,* as out of a bitter fountain, *proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnessing, blasphemy,* and all other pollutions beside. All the sins of people are included, inclosed, connected together as links in a chain; so that when one link is seen, the whole chain may be said to be seen. Suppose a chain whereof some links are above the ground, and all the rest of it hanging down into a dark and deep pit; when the upper links are seen, in their connection with the whole, then one may be said to have seen all, because all are included and inclosed in what he saw.

3. It may be said *potentially, He told me all things that ever I did;* because, by that one instance he gave a proof of his ability so to do. He that could tell me this, could tell me all; he that could observe this, hath observed all that ever I did, and can as easily tell me all as tell me a part; for none but the *Searcher of hearts,* that sees all my goings, could have told me this. He that can save to the utmost, can see to the uttermost.

4. It may be said *representatively, He told me all things that ever I did;* for this discovery represented all other things, all my other sins. This representation is like that which is made in a mirror; if one set a looking-glass

glaſs before you to ſee a ſpot in your face, when you ſee that, at the ſame time you ſee all the ſpots there: ſo, when Chriſt ſets the glaſs of his word before you to ſee ſuch a particular ſpot and blot; in the ſame glaſs you have a view and repreſentation of all the ſpots, and all the blemiſhes of your heart and way. For, we may conceive this repreſentation like that which is made in a map; if one ſhew you, for example, a particular city in the map of the world, why, at the ſame time, he preſents to you all the terraqueous globe; the whole world at one glance: ſo here, when, in the light of the Spirit, Chriſt diſcovers to you one ſin, in the ſame map you ſee the whole world of wickedneſs, a world of atheiſm, enmity, unbelief, pride, ſelf, and other plagues innumerable.

Thus in the day of gracious manifeſtation, wherein Chriſt, the Sun of righteouſneſs, diſcovers himſelf, the ſinner, that is privileged with it, cannot but ſee a black ſight of himſelf, which makes him ſay, in effect, *He told me all* the ills *that ever I did:* he told me what I have been, and what I have done; that I have been a ſinner in Adam, and a tranſgreſſor from the womb: that I have done evil as I could; and given innumerable inſtances of a *carnal mind*, which is *enmity againſt God;* and of an *unbelieving heart*, which is *enmity againſt Chriſt;* and of *reſiſtance to the motions of heaven*, which is *enmity againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* When the ſun ſhines into a dark houſe, by a ſmall window, the beams diſcover innumerable motes and hovering particles of duſt in that part of the houſe where the light is ſhining, by which we are made to ſee and underſtand that the whole houſe is full of motes and duſt: even ſo here, when Chriſt, the Sun of righteouſneſs, appears and ſhines in upon the dark dungeon of a ſinner's heart, and diſcovers any motes and blotes that are there, then it appears that the whole houſe, the whole heart and nature is full of the duſt and ſmoke of hell; which makes the ſoul cry out with Job, *Behold I am vile:* and hence the more precious that Chriſt appears in any man's eye, the more vile does he appear in his own eye, and debaſe himſelf to the loweſt; he thinks himſelf the moſt loth-

ſome

ſome ſinner that ever was ſeen, when Chriſt tells him all that ever he did.——So much ſhall ſuffice concerning the ſoul-debaſing effects of Chriſt's manifeſting himſelf, imported in that expreſſion, *He told me all things that ever I did:* at one glance he gave me a view of all the ſins that ever I was guilty of.

III. The *third* general head propoſed, was, To ſhow, What are theſe *Chriſt-exalting commendations* wherein ſuch diſcoveries of Chriſt vent themſelves, and which are imported in the words of the woman here, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Chriſt?* Here, confining myſelf to the *matter* and the *manner* of the commendation in the text, notice,

1*ſt*, The *matter* of the commendation, or in what *reſpects* ſhe commends Chriſt to her neighbours; and it is particularly in two reſpects which are very comprehenſive. 1. She commends him in his *natures*. 2. In his *offices*.

1. In his *natures*, as the Man-God, or the God-man, that *told me all things that ever I did*. Here is his human nature; but, O ſhe ſaw his divinity through the vail of his humanity; *He told me all things that ever I did*, and gave me thus an infallible proof of his being the ſupreme God. She was neither an Arian nor a Socinian; neither will any be ſo that gets ſuch a diſcovery of Chriſt as ſhe got. And ſurely the blaſphemous Arians of our day † bewray their ignorance, and want of true learning and ſpiritual knowledge, ſuch as this poor woman had. O but a little glance of Chriſt's glory can make a poor illiterate woman wiſer than the learned Rabbies, that were never taught of God, and yet think themſelves the only wits of the world. Thoſe to whom Chriſt diſcovers himſelf, as they will ſee, ſo they will commend him to others as God in *our nature; God manifeſted in the fleſh*. Whoever queſtioned but the Searcher of hearts, who knows all things, is the true and ſu-

† That Arianiſm was much upon the increaſe, about this time, both in Scotland and England, was formerly noticed, Vol. II. p. 466, 467.

preme God, that can give laws to bind the heart and conſciences of men, and then diſcloſe their hearts to them, and tell them all theſe things wherein they have violate and broken that law, in heart or way? Yet Chriſt is here declared to be ſuch an one; *He told me all things that ever I did.* Why, this can be no more denied, than it can be queſtioned whether it was the great God, the true and ſupreme God, that gave out the law upon mount Sinai? No-body doubts that, ſay you; why then, it is declared in ſcripture that it was this ſame Jeſus that did ſo; Pſalm lxviii. 17, 18. *The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou haſt aſcended on high; thou haſt led captivity captive; thou haſt received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell amongſt them:* And of whom all this is ſpoken the apoſtle ſhews, Eph. vi. 8.; and every believer knows: *He told me all things that ever I did;* he told me all my ſins and tranſgreſſions of his law which he gave forth at mount Sinai. By a ſanctified ſight of ſome ſins he opened my eyes to ſee more and more; yea, to ſee all my ſins, and that I was nothing but a maſs of ſin, enmity, and pollution. And thus I ſaw the Revealer to be the true and ſupreme God, even the eternal Son of God, clothed with human nature; *A man that told me all things that ever I did;* a man that told me what none but God can do; a man that proved himſelf to be God, by an argument of power upon my heart and conſcience; an argument drawn from his omniſcient eye, and driven in upon my heart by his omnipotent hand.

2. In his *offices* he is here commended and exalted; *Is not this the Chriſt?* that is, Is not this the true Meſſias promiſed, propheſied of in the Old Teſtament? This is her Εὕρηκα, like that, John i. 45. *We have found him, of whom Moſes in the law and the prophets did write:* even ſo, I have found him, might ſhe ſay; he hath been with me, and I have been with him. He hath ſpoken to me, and I have ſpoken to him. He hath not only told me what I am, and what I have been, and what I have done, but told me what he is; and I have found him to be God as well as man. And who is he then,

but

but the promiſed IMMANUEL, *God with us.—Is not this the Chriſt?* that is, the *Anointed of God*, to the ſaving offices of Prophet, Prieſt, and King; this the word *Chriſt* eſpecially imports, and has a particular reference to. He is *anointed*, as a Prophet, to declare the mind of God; *anointed*, as a Prieſt, to make reconciliation with God; and *anointed*, as a King, to ſubdue ſinners to God; and make them friends that are enemies to God: *He is anointed with the Spirit above meaſure*, John iii. 34. To render him a fit Prophet, he hath the *Spirit of wiſdom and underſtanding* above meaſure; to make him a fit Prieſt, he hath the Spirit of love and compaſſion above meaſure; and that he may be a fit King, he hath the Spirit of power and of government.—*Is not this the Chriſt?* that is, *the Sealed and Sent of God*, cloathed with a commiſſion from God to ſeek and ſave loſt ſinners, John vi. 27. *Him hath God the Father ſealed*; that is, authorized unto this work, according as himſelf declares, Iſa. lxi. 1. compared with Luke vi. 18. *Is not this the Chriſt?* namely, he that is anointed that he may anoint; *anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows.* Believers are ſaid to *receive the anointing*: but there is a vaſt odds betwixt the anointing of Chriſt, and the anointing of believers; for, Chriſt is the fountain, from whom all the ſtreams flow; the ſun, from whom all the beams of grace ſhine: grace, in believers, is like water in a brook; but grace, in Chriſt, is like water in the ocean: grace, in the believer, is like broken beams; but, in Chriſt, it is like the bright centre of all light. He received the Spirit of all grace, for this very end to be beſtowed upon others. The firſt Adam brought an emptineſs on the whole creation; but the ſecond Adam came to fill all things and perſons, to fill Jew and Gentile, that *of his fulneſs we might receive grace for grace.* The oil of grace and gladneſs was poured out upon our IMMANUEL, of purpoſe that he might pour it down upon the barren mountains. ——Thus we ſee in what reſpects he is here recommended, or the matter of the commendation. Let us view,

2*dly*, The *manner* of the commendation; or in what

way she does it. We may read, in the bosom of the text, several *properties* of this exercise of commending and exalting Christ, which saving discoveries of him lead unto. And,

1. It is an *open* and *public* commendation of Christ; for, she went away to the *city*, and says, O people, *Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* She being formerly a lewd woman, had given open offence, and open scandal to the *citizens*, and now, upon the discovery of her sin, and the discovery of the Saviour, she gave as open and ready evidence of her repentance and conversion, by inviting them all to *come and see* him that had given her a *conviction* of her sin and vileness, and a manifestation of his glory and grace. Saving discoveries of Christ will lead people as openly to glorify and honour him, as they have before dishonoured him.

2. It is an *experimental* commendation of him; she commends him from her own experience and feeling; *Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did:* I have seen his face, and heard his voice, and felt his power; he has convinced and converted me; therefore, from my own feeling and experience, I commend his grace unto you. It is like that, 1 John i. 3. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us.* It was something like that of David, Psalm lxvi. 16. *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will tell what he hath done for my soul.* Yea, he commends Christ not only to believers, but to others, as you see his resolution is, Psal. li. 13. Upon his getting a new visit, and the Lord's restoring to him the joy of his salvation, and upholding him with his free Spirit, *Then*, says he, *will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.* Thus Paul set forth the abundant grace of God from his own experience, *I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy,—and the grace of God was exceeding abundant*, &c. 1 Tim. i. 13, 14. They that have experience of the things of Christ themselves, will be most zealous in manifesting the things of Christ to others, and in pressing them to come to Christ, as having proof

and

and experience of his grace; and, indeed, they can beſt ſpeak of Chriſt, to whom Chriſt hath ſpoken, and *who believe, and therefore ſpeak.*

3. It is a *charitative* commendation of Chriſt; ſhe is now filled with ſuch Chriſtian love to others, and particularly to thoſe ſhe was moſt concerned with, and intereſted in, that ſhe would have them all drawn to Chriſt. She ſaid to the men, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did.* Perhaps there were ſome of them ſhe had tempted to ſin and wickedneſs before, ſhe now would have them turned to Chriſt; a great change. They that have ſeen Chriſt cannot but deſire that others may ſee him too, they would have all to come and ſee. O that all the world would come and ſee, come and wonder, come and admire him: as Abraham commanded his children and ſervants *to ſeek and ſerve the Lord;* ſo, if one that had got the diſcovery of Chriſt could do it, it would command thouſands to come and ſee him, and ſerve him. When Chriſt diſcovers himſelf, and ſpeaks into the heart of a man, it makes the man ſpeak good of Chriſt.—Again, a ſight of Chriſt's face ſmites the ſoul with a likeneſs to him in love; and hence the ſinner, immediately upon the revelation of Chriſt, is filled with a ſtrange love; a love of complacence to the ſaints, and a love of benevolence to the ſouls of others.

4. It is a *judicious* commendation of Chriſt, that iſſues from the diſcovery of Chriſt. And here ſeveral things point out the judgment and wiſdom by which ſhe commends Chriſt unto them. It is evident from the *method* ſhe takes, or would have them to take; ſhe is not content that they reſt upon her report only, but would have them *taſte* and *ſee* themſelves: ſhe knew that their love would not terminate ſavingly upon her teſtimony; and therefore would have them coming to Chriſt himſelf.—Again, it is evident how judicious it was, from her endeavour to draw them to Chriſt, with the very ſame *hook* that catched herſelf. Chriſt ſpake many good words to her; but the firſt thing that took hold of her heart, and catched her was this, *He told me all things that ever I did.* His heart-ſearching and diſcovering word was the means of her converſion; and ſhe would have

have them drawn to Chriſt by the ſame means: *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*—It is evident alſo how judicious it was by the *gradation* of her words, or the gradually riſing ſteps of her commendation: ſhe begins ſomewhat low, *Come ſee a man;* ſhe goes on to a higher not, *He told me all things that ever I did;* and ſhe concludes with the higheſt commendation of him, *Is not this the Chriſt?* Not only God, but God appearing in all his glorious robes of grace, even IMMANUEL, *God with us.*—In a word, it is evident how judicious it is from the *manner* of her arguing: ſhe argues from his telling part of her ſecret wickedneſs, *That he told her all;* q: d. He could as eaſily have told me all things that ever I ſaid, and all things that ever I deſigned, and all things that ever I thought, as he told me what I did: yea, I got ſuch a broad look of all my ſins in that one glaſs of a diſcovery that he gave me, that I cannot but own he *told me all things that ever I did.*—Again, ſhe argues from the *dignity* that ſhe ſaw joined with his *humanity*, that he was the true Meſſias; and hence judiciouſly infers, *Is not this the Chriſt?* She was never at a college to learn, how to frame an argument; but having been at Chriſt's ſchool for a little pleaſant while, ſhe there learned ſome heavenly logic; can ſuch a man as this be any other but the Chriſt? The more clear diſcovery that any gets of Chriſt, the more ſkilful and expert they will be in commending him to others; as we ſee in our apoſtle Paul, after Chriſt was revealed in him, what clear diſcoveries did he make of Chriſt to others, as appears in the Acts of the apoſtles, and in all his epiſtles.

5. It is a *pathetic* commendation of Chriſt that iſſues from the diſcoveries of him. Her heart is full of Chriſt, and full of deſire to praiſe, and exalt, and commend him to others; and her heart vents itſelf in ſeveral pathetical expreſſions: hence ſhe ſpake firſt in a *hortatory* manner, *Come and ſee*, ſays ſhe; O citizens, ſlip not this opportunity, when ſuch a glorious ſight is to be ſeen.—Next ſhe ſpake in an *aſſertory* manner; ſhe aſſerts ſome ſtrange things concerning him, he is a man *that told me all things that ever I did;* he is a ſeer and revealer of the ſecrets

of

of men, and therefore must be a Prophet, and more than a prophet, a revealer of the counsel of God.—And finally, she spake in a *questionary* and *expostulatory* manner, *Is not this the Christ?* He can be none else but the Messias, the Christ of God. She is not content to commend him in one particular, but she must go on and insist in his praise and commendation, and cannot think she can commend him enough; *Is not this the Christ?* She makes no question of it herself. And the design of her interrogation is to put it out of doubt with them. Who can this be but the Christ? How can it be any other but the Christ? They that have met with Christ, and got the heart touched by his grace, it is in a hearty cordial way they speak of him, and commend him to others. The sinner that hath met with a Saviour, O how gladly would he trumpet forth his praise if he could.—There is something further here that points out the pathetic manner of the commendation, and that is an *appeal* to them as it were in the bosom of this question, *Is not this the Christ?* I appeal to you, might she say, if it be not so, that he is CHRIST, the *Anointed of God.* I cannot think but you must judge of him as I do; and, who will not think highly of him as I do? Indeed, the enlightened soul is ready to think all the world should be of his mind, the light and evidence is so clear to him; and hence, they that have got a discovery of Christ, wonder that any would esteem otherwise of Christ than they. O be astonished that all the world is not wondering at his glory. Oh! what can blind them! What can bewitch them at this rate, that they are not of the same mind concerning Christ, and that they are not admirers of him as well as I am! Surely there is nothing appears with such evidence and demonstration as this glory and excellency of a God-man. Who can be so stupid and senseless as to reckon otherwise? *Is not this the Christ?* The proof is so plain to me, says the soul, and the light and power so great by which Christ is discovered to me, that it is truly irresistable, and who, in all the world, can possibly resist the evidence of it? *Is not this the Christ?* —O how pathetic is the commendation!

6. It is a *practical* commendation that issues from a saving

ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt, and ſuch is that of the woman of Samaria here; and hence, ſhe ſays not, *Go ſee* him; but, *Come ſee* him. They that truly invite others to come to Chriſt, will not be content to ſend them to him, but they would ſhare themſelves of more and more of Chriſt. Their language is not, *Go, ſee;* but, *Come, ſee.* It would have argued no great eſteem of Chriſt, nor high commendation of him, ſhould the woman have ſaid, I have ſeen him already, go ye and ſee him next; they might have thought ſhe had enough of him: but, *Come ſee* him, ſays ſhe; q. d. Come along with me, and I will go upon your head, like a captain, and lead the van myſelf. I have ſeen him to my heart's content, and am deſirous to get another ſight, a new ſight of him; and I would have all the people in Samaria, the whole town to go along with me. I have been an ill woman, a baſe woman, that have led ſome of you to ſin; and may I now be the happy inſtrument of bringing you to the Saviour. I have led ſome of you to the gates of hell; O let me now lead you to the gate of heaven! If I have tempted any of you to wickedneſs, O let me now be inſtrumental in turning you to righteouſneſs; yea, to the Lord my righteouſneſs, whom I have got a ſaving ſight of; and, therefore, let me give you a good example, for all the ill example I have given you. Here was a change indeed, and a practical commendation. Surely they commend Chriſt moſt effectually, who do it not only by their profeſſion, but by their practice; not merely by their counſel, but by their example; and who can ſay not only, *Go ſee;* but, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did.* It is a *come ſee* that makes others to go alſo; Zech. viii. 21. *Let us go ſpeedily to pray before the Lord, and to ſeek the Lord of hoſts, I will go alſo;* there is one: ver. 23. you find more following, *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* Thus it was the church's not only commending of Chriſt, but diligently ſeeking after him whom ſhe commended, that made the daughters of Jeruſalem ſay, Song vi. 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone, that we may ſeek him with thee?* And we ſee how effectual this practical commendation of Chriſt was, that the woman gave to

the

the Samaritans, as you may read verſes 30, 39,—42. She was the bleſſed inſtrument of drawing many there to the Lord Jeſus.

IV. The *fourth* general head propoſed, was, To give the *reaſons* of the doctrine, whence it is that *ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt* makes perſons to *condemn* and *debaſe themſelves* to the loweſt, and *commend* and *exalt* Chriſt to the higheſt; or, what influence a ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt hath upon this ſelf-debaſing and Chriſt-exalting exerciſe? I ſhall conſider the reaſons of this two-fold effect jointly, becauſe they neceſſarily go together, and are influenced by the ſame means: they are like the two ſcales of a balance, that which makes the one ſcale fall and go down, makes the other riſe and go up; ſo that diſcovery of Chriſt which brings down ſelf to the duſt, does at the ſame time ſet up Chriſt upon the throne. When the *haughtineſs of man is brought low, then the Lord alone is exalted*, Iſa. ii. 11.

1. The *firſt* reaſon then, why the ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt do humble ſelf to the loweſt, and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt, is from the *ſpecial light* wherein Chriſt is ſeen. They that ſee the glory of Chriſt with the one eye, they ſee, at the ſame time, their own unworthineſs with the other. The ſame light that diſcovers the holineſs of God, diſcovers the vileneſs of man. The ſame light that diſcovers the fulneſs of Chriſt, diſcovers the emptineſs of the creature. That light that diſcovers his infinite merit, diſcovers the infinite guilt and demerit of ſin. When the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is ſeen, the unrighteouſneſs of the ſinner is ſeen at the ſame time, and in the ſame light; and hence, no wonder then, while the poor ſoul is aſtoniſhed with the view of God's glory in the face of Chriſt, he is alſo aſtoniſhed with the view and apprehenſion of his own baſeneſs and brutiſhneſs; and has the meaneſt thoughts of himſelf when he has the higheſt thoughts of Chriſt. The more a man converſes with Chriſt, the more he converſes with himſelf; and the light that diſcovers Chriſt, diſcovers the ſoul to itſelf: and therefore the diſcoveries of Chriſt cannot but tend to debaſe ſelf, and exalt Chriſt.

2. When Chriſt is diſcovered, then the *love of God* to the ſoul is diſcovered, and this fills it with humble wonder. O! how aſtoniſhing a thing is it, that God's love is manifeſted to one ſo full of ſin and wickedneſs! This debaſes the ſoul in its own ſight, becauſe it knows itſelf to be ſo unworthy of his love; this works humility: but yet unworthy as it is, the love of God is manifeſted to it; this quickens love in the ſoul, and love excites praiſe. O! how ſhall I manifeſt love to him that hath manifeſted love to the like of me! Thus the love of Chriſt conſtrains both to the debaſing of ſelf and exalting of Chriſt.

3. The *third* reaſon is, from the *ſpecial work of the Spirit*: there is a ſpeciality in the work of the Spirit upon the ſoul to whom Chriſt is ſavingly diſcovered; *Lord*, ſays Judas, not Iſcariot, *how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf to us, and not to the world?* John xiv. 22. God manifeſts his love to the world, in outward reſpects; but to his own, in his privy-chamber. It is the work and office of the Spirit to ſet home the love of God upon the hearts of his people; and to every one of them alone, as it were: he takes them aſide, that they may have ſome private converſation with Chriſt; ſuch as this woman had, when Chriſt was the only preacher, and ſhe was the only hearer. O but the view of this diſtinguiſhed grace raiſes in the ſoul both David's note, *What am I, and what is my father's houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* And Mary's note at the ſame time, *My ſoul doth magnify the Lord.*

4. The influence that the diſcovery of Chriſt hath upon the ſelf-debaſing and Chriſt-exalting exerciſe, flows from the *ſpiritual end* and *deſign* of theſe ſaving diſcoveries and manifeſtations of Chriſt; this is God's great end in diſcovering Chriſt, 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31. *Of God, he is made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.* For what end? *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his ſight; but that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord:* that is, that ſelf may be condemned and debaſed, and Chriſt alone may be commended and exalted. And this is the great end of the Spirit's work: when he comes to teſtify of Chriſt, what is his deſign? Why, ſays Chriſt, John xvi. 9, 14. *He will convince the world of ſin, and he*

ſhall glorify me; that is, he will humble the ſinner, on the one hand, and exalt the Saviour, on the other; and ſo lead the ſinner to condemn himſelf and to commend Chriſt.

5. It ariſes from the *ſpecial power* and *efficacy* that is in ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt, for working all ſaving effects; why, *beholding his glory, we are changed into the ſame image*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.; and changed, as in other reſpects, ſo in this particular, that ſelf is pulled down, and Chriſt ſet up: we are changed from pride, to humility; from ſelf-love, to ſelf-loathing; from ſelf-indulgence, to ſelf-abhorrence; and from ſelf-ſeeking and ſelf-exalting, to a Chriſt-exalting diſpoſition and exerciſe. All the graces of the Spirit iſſue from a ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt, and come in that way to a lively exerciſe; *We beholding his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: of his fulneſs have we all received, and grace for grace*, John i. 14, 16. We cannot ſee his fulneſs, without ſharing of his fulneſs; yea, to ſee his fulneſs is to ſhare of it: this is the ſtrength of that *for* which we have in John iii. 2. *We ſhall be like him,* FOR *we ſhall ſee him as he is;* ſo here, *beholding his glory, his fulneſs of grace and truth,* we *receive out of his fulneſs.* Now, the more of Chriſt's fulneſs and Spirit that one hath, the more will he have of Chriſt's ends before him; which is a debaſing of the creature, and a glorifying of God, that he may be *all in all.*

6. This exerciſe doth ariſe from the *divine ſplendor* of the diſcovery; for, when Chriſt diſcovers his face, then the *glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, is diſcovered, 2 Cor. iv. 6. When Chriſt is ſeen, then the glory of God's perfections, and the ſplendor of his attributes, is ſeen. Now, every thing in God daſhes the ſinful man that ſees it, and makes him nothing in his own eyes; and, at the ſame time, makes Chriſt, in whom that divine glory ſhines, to be *all in all* to the man; ſo that he cannot but ſet Chriſt above all, and give him, *in all things, the pre-eminence.*——Thus you ſee the reaſons whence it is, that ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt make the ſubjects thereof to condemn and debaſe themſelves to the loweſt, and to commend and exalt

Chriſt to the higheſt, as the woman of Samaria here does; *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*

V. The *fifth* thing propoſed, was, To make ſome *application* of the whole. And this we ſhall eſſay in an uſe of information, examination, and exhortation.

1*ſt*, We ſhall improve this ſubject in an uſe of *information*, by deducing the following *inferences*. Is it ſo then, that *ſaving diſcoveries of Chriſt* have this effect, to make one, at the ſame time, to *condemn and debaſe himſelf*, and to *commend and exalt Chriſt*, ſaying, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* From this text and doctrine we may ſee and learn the following leſſons.

1. Hence ſee why *pride* and *ſelf-conceit*, *ſelf-righteouſneſs* and *ſelf-juſtification* prevail ſo much in the world, and in the viſible church; and what makes people, notwithſtanding all that ever they did, yet to be vainly puft up, inſtead of condemning and debaſing themſelves: why, becauſe they have never got a *ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt*; Chriſt hath never touched their heart, and told them all that ever they did: they are ſtrangers to the power of the word. It is very ſtrange how wicked men will juſtify themſelves, as thoſe, John viii. 48. *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a devil?* Here was the greateſt blaſphemy imaginable, to ſay this of Chriſt; yet they juſtify it, *Say we not well in this?* Chriſtleſs men will juſtify their ill words, and baſe works, and evil actions. — What ſay you, *Sabbath-breaker?* Why, was it not well done, ſay you? it is but a work of neceſſity, a needful buſineſs. — What ſay you, *drunkard?* Why, it was but a hearty bottle with my friends; and was it not well done? — What ſay you, *whoremonger?* Why, it was but a trick of youth; and what is the matter of that? — What ſay you, *ſwearer?* Why, it was neither banning nor ſwearing that I intended; it was but a ſingle word, and a word in paſſion. — What ſay you, *ſcold* and *railer?* Why, ſay you, I think they deſerved all that I ſaid to them; I am ſure I looſed my tongue upon ſuch a man, and gave him his holy-day's name;

and

and was it not well done, and well ſaid?——Indeed, you will hardly get a ſinner at all; if you will take every perſon's excuſe, and every body's judgment of themſelves, they will juſtify all that ever they did; or, at leaſt, make it but a matter of moon-ſhine. A common ſtrumpet, ſuch as this woman was formerly, may think nothing of all her baſe and lewd behaviour. The moſt notorious ſinner goes lightly under the burden of his ſin, without any ſelf-condemnation or ſelf-debaſement, till Chriſt and thy meet together; and until he ſhow them, by one glance, all things that ever they did.

2. Hence ſee, the *greateſt of ſinners* may conceive *hope of mercy* at the hand of our merciful Lord Jeſus, from ſuch inſtances as this; yet, let not wicked ſinners indulge themſelves in ſin, and preſume that God will not notice their lewdneſs, and ſecret as well as open wickedneſs; for the time is coming, wherein Chriſt will, either in a way of mercy or judgment, *tell you all things that ever you did.* Pſalm l. 21. *Thoſe things thou haſt done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughtſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thyſelf; but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes. Conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt he tear you in pieces, when there is none to deliver.* If this remarkable inſtance of grace, to ſuch a baſe woman, be abuſed by you to licentiouſneſs, and your opening a door of preſumption to yourſelf, expecting mercy in a continued courſe of wickedneſs, you are under a terrible deluſion; for, *God will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of him that goes on in his treſpaſſes.* But, if you would enter in at the door of hope that is opened to you, in ſuch examples as this, O ſeek, that, in a merciful way, he may diſcover your ſins to you, ſo as to make you know, at the ſame time, that he is *the Chriſt*, the *anointed of God*, to ſave you from your ſin.

3. Hence ſee, that the *word preached* doth then only do ſaving good, when it comes *cloſe home to the heart*, and when *Chriſt is ſeen* there; for here, ſee how the word of Chriſt came home with power upon this woman's heart; *He told me; he told me all things that ever I did.*

I did. The word was the ſearcher and diſcerner of the thoughts and intent of the heart: and the ſearching word was the ſtrong hook that catched her; and ſhe ſaw Chriſt therein: *Is not this the Chriſt?* Then the word is effectual, and prevails when Chriſt himſelf is ſeen: Chriſt is the beſt preacher himſelf; the only powerful preacher, who, by his word, can open the eyes; and by a ſanctified ſight of one ſin, diſcovers all to the man; and in that diſcovery ſhews himſelf to be the Chriſt.

4. Hence ſee, that *ſaving illumination* is the *beſt antidote againſt Arianiſm.* Here the enlightened woman profeſſes her faith of Chriſt's Deity, and thereupon of his being the CHRIST: ſhe ſees him to be the true God, *who told her all things that ever ſhe did;* and thence declares him to be the true Meſſias: *Is not this the Chriſt?* If Chriſt were not the true God, he could not be the true Meſſias; and conſequently, they who deny his ſupreme Deity, deny that he is the Chriſt. And thus blaſphemous Arians are guilty of *denying the Lord that bought them:* and they that thus deny him were never enlightened by him. A ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt will afford a poor illiterate perſon an argument from experience, and ſpiritual feeling, more ſtrong and powerful, for proving the ſupreme Deity of Chriſt, than all the learned and logical arguments in the world, which a man may be fraughted with, and yet remain an Atheiſt: and, indeed, Arians are Atheiſts, whatever they profeſs; for, *he that denies the Son, denies the Father alſo:* becauſe, to deny the *neceſſary exiſtence* of the Son, is to reject the *neceſſary paternity* of the Father, who yet is as neceſſarily Father, as he is God; and to deny both the Father and the Son, is to contemn the *neceſſary proceſſion* of the Holy Ghoſt from both: ſo that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt is denied, when the ſupreme Deity of Chriſt is impugned. Alas! Sirs, this atheiſtical world needs ſuch a turn and meaſure of enlightening grace as this poor woman got.

5. Hence ſee, that *perſuaſion*, with *application*, is in the *nature of ſaving faith*, both objective and ſubjective. Perſuaſion *objective*, aſſuring the man that this is *the Chriſt;*

Chriſt; and *ſubjective* alſo, aſſuring the man that as he is the Chriſt, the anointed; ſo he is anointed for *my behalf;* anointed, as the woman here ſuggeſts, as a Prophet for me, to tell *me all things that ever I did:* and, at the ſame time, that he told me all my ſins, he told me that he was the Chriſt, anointed to ſave me; and hence ſhe glories in him as *the Chriſt.* Whenever he manifeſts himſelf, faith brings in holy triumph in the Lord, even under a ſight of the greateſt ſinfulneſs. Indeed, ſuch a ſight as this woman got, namely, of the guilt of all the evils that ever ſhe did, would have cauſed trembling, inſtead of triumphing, if faith's view of Chriſt diſcovered to her, had not carried, in the boſſom of it, a *fiducial perſuaſion* of his being a Chriſt for her; which, whenever ſhe ſaw, then ſhe was kindly humbled: which leads me to another inference.

6. Hence ſee, that *true goſpel humiliation* and *evangelical repentance* goes not BEFORE, but is a *fruit of faith,* and of Chriſt manifeſting himſelf to the ſoul; for then, and not till then, does ſhe cry out, O! he hath *told me all things that ever I did.* Now, ſhe ſees all her ſins in the brighteſt light. By the light of the ſtars we may ſee ſome things; by the light of the moon, we ſee more; but by the light of the ſun, we ſee moſt of all. By the light of nature, people may ſee ſome ſins; by the light of the law, more, much more; for, *by the law is the knowledge of ſin;* but, by the light of the Sun of righteouſneſs, moſt of all is diſcovered: but with this difference, that the moon-light of the law ſhews the diſeaſe, and no more, living the ſinner to die in that diſeaſe, and periſh; but the ſun-light of the goſpel diſcovers the remedy, *The Sun of righteouſneſs ariſing with healing under his wings.* And when no leſs than the blood and righteouſneſs of God is ſeen to be the healing medicine, then the diſeaſe appears to be infinitely great; and yet the ſight is infinitely ſweet, becauſe it is a ſight of that wonderful healing, under theſe wings and rays of the Sun of righteouſneſs: this makes kindly and pleaſant humiliation.

7. Hence ſee, that *ſaving diſcoveries* of Chriſt are *very rare in our day;* for, very few are thus exerciſed, either

ther in condemning and debasing themselves, under a sense of all that ever they did; or in commending and exalting Christ, and dealing with others to come and see him. Oh! how few humble walkers, and hearty commenders of Christ are to be observed! Few taking kindly with their sin, and few breaking forth into the praising commendations of Christ! When this woman got a discovery of Christ, she kindly takes with her whoredoms, and all her sins that ever she did, and zealously breaks forth into the praises and commendation of Christ. But whence is it, that the land we live in, the church of Scotland, is not taking with, and kindly acknowledging all that ever she did, and taking with all her whoredoms and adulteries, and treacherous breaking covenant with her God to whom she solemnly gave her hand? Whence is it that there is so little zeal in commending and exalting Christ in his supreme Deity, in a day wherein Arian * blasphemers open their mouth against him? Whence is there so little zeal for the reviving of our broken covenants, national and solemn league, even in a day wherein the obligation thereof is denied? Why are we neither humbly condemning ourselves, and taking with our national sins, nor highly commending Christ, and exalting him in his injured honours, truths, and prerogatives, but rather conniving with, and winking at all the dishonours done to him? Why, what is the matter? The reason is, *saving discoveries of Christ*, which should work the contrary effect, are *very rare*. When the Lord hath a mind to build up Zion, *he appears in his glory*, as he did in the days of our Reformation: but now he hath justly hid himself from the God-provoking, Christ-despising, gospel-slighting generation. But, O Sirs, if he would yet appear and discover his glory in the sanctuary, then we might expect Reformation times: but, as matters stand, we look as if a stroke

* That Arianism was gaining ground in Scotland, at this time, was formerly noticed, Vol. II. p. 466, 467. And the process, before the supreme ecclesiastical court, relative to this affair, was this year terminated, with no very adequate sentence against the propagator of it; as any one may see who consults the printed process relative to that affair.

and

and judgment, that hath been ſo long threatened, were ſuddenly to fall upon us with a terrible vengeance. There were little hazard of the preſent rumour of war †, if the Lord, who is a man of war, were not againſt us; and if the Lord carry on his controverſy, it will be little wonder, though we ſhould ſee the land turned into a field of blood and deſolation, before we ſee another communion-ſolemnity here. God hath borne long with us; but how much longer he will do ſo, who can tell? Forty years peace in the church is a wonder, *&c.* But,

8. Hence ſee, that a *meeting with Chriſt*, makes a *marvellous change* upon a perſon or people that are ſo privileged. Before this woman met with Chriſt, or rather before he met with her, ſhe was nothing but a common ſtrumpet; but now ſhe is humbled to the duſt for the ſins ſhe had formerly indulged herſelf in, and commends and exalts that Lord whom ſhe had diſhonoured. She is brought *from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;* from being exerciſed in corrupting and debauching her neighbours, to a kindly concern for their ſoul's everlaſting welfare, to get them brought to Chriſt. Saving illumination and acquaintance with Chriſt creates, in the heart, a ſympathy with the caſe of poor Chriſtleſs ſinners: *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Chriſt?* This leads me to

Uſe 2. Namely, an uſe of *trial* and *examination*, whether you have met with Chriſt, and got a ſaving diſcovery of him at this occaſion or formerly. O how ſhall I know, ſay you, if I have met with Chriſt, and if he hath diſcovered himſelf to me? Why, if you have, then this diſcovery has led you to theſe two things. 1. A humiliation of *ſelf* to the loweſt. 2. An exalting of *Chriſt* to the higheſt.

1*ſt*, What *ſelf-humbling diſpoſition* and *abaſement* hath

† About this time the nation was mightily alarmed about a rupture with Spain; who, as was affirmed, had entered into a formidable alliance with different powers, in order to recover Gibraltar and Portmahon, and place the Pretender on the throne of Britain.

been wrought in you? Are you laid low in the duſt, and made vile in your own eyes, by Chriſt diſcovering you to yourſelf? Have you got a diſcovery of your own ſinfulneſs, uglineſs, and unworthineſs? Hath Chriſt fallen a diſcourſing with you, and *told you all things that ever you did?* Hath he told you of your ill life, your wicked heart, your depraved nature? Hath he told you of your unbelief? For when the Spirit comes, he *reproves the world of ſin; becauſe they believe not in him.* Hath he told you of your ſecret ſins, and diſcovered to you what none but himſelf could tell you? And, have you taken it from himſelf, without ſaying, who has gone and told the miniſters this and that of me? Hath he told you of your wicked thoughts and intentions, and made the word the diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of your heart! Hath he told you your ſpiritual wickedneſs, your atheiſm, ignorance, enmity, carnality, pride, ſelf, and hypocriſy, and made you to know the plagues of your own heart? Hath he told you of the fig-leaves you have been covering yourſelf with, and the falſe refuges you have been running to, and chaſed you out of your refuges of lies? Hath he told you your ſecret, as well as open ſins, and ſo told you ſome things, as that thereby he hath diſcovered the reſt to you; and you have been led by the ſtreams to the fountain of ſin within? And, has he given you, by one glance upon the map of your corrupt nature, a view of your total depravation? Hath he told you your proper name by calling you a *dog*, and by making you take with your name, ſaying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*, a devil, a monſter? *Behold I am vile!* Why, it is a glorious internal light that diſcovers this internal vileneſs. What makes you, with Job, to *abhor yourſelf?* Why, it ſays, *Now your eyes ſee him*, Job xlii. 5, 6. What makes you, with Paul, look upon yourſelf as *leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints;* yea, as the *chief of* all *ſinners*, the worſt of all ſinners, the vileſt of all ſinners? Why, it ſays, *He hath revealed his ſon in you.* It is not natural for proud man to think ſo baſely of himſelf; it is the Spirit of Chriſt that hath told you what you are. But here, to prevent any miſtake, it may be aſked,

QUEST. *May not one who hath not the Spirit of God, nor*

nor a renewed conſcience, be able to diſcern his own vileneſs?

ANSW. There is a double knowledge or underſtanding that men may have of themſelves, *viz.* ſpeculative and practical. As to the general *ſpeculative* knowledge, a man may have this; common ſenſe and reaſon may tell him his ſin, and he may know himſelf to be a ſinner, as being guilty of groſs ſins, ſuch as, drunkenneſs, whoredom, ſwearing, and the like. But there is a particular *practical* knowledge and underſtanding, which is twofold, *viz.* either from the Spirit of God without us, or from the Spirit of God within us. That practical underſtanding which is from the Spirit of God *without* us, is what alſo the unregenerate may have. The Spirit of God, not yet received, but without a man, may come and make ſuch diſcoveries of his ſin, and guilt, and wickedneſs, as may make him cry out, That he is *undone, undone.* Such a knowledge had Nebuchadnezzar of the God of Shadrach, Meſech, and Abednego. Such a knowledge alſo, it ſeems, Cain and Judas had. But the Spirit of God *within* us gives ſpiritual light and ſenſe upon the conſcience, and rectifies the judgment; whereas the Spirit of God, *without* a man, diſcovers ſin mainly in order to hell and wrath, making him ſay, *undone, undone.* The Spirit of God within a man makes him ſee the vileneſs of ſin, and lament and mourn for that, ſaying, *Unclean, unclean. O wretched man that I am! Behold I am vile!* This affects him more than the wrath of God; yea, even when he ſees the wrath of God is turned away, and that the ſhower is over his head, and hath lighted on the head of the Cautioner, even then he abhors himſelf for his own wickedneſs more than ever. This is from the Spirit of God within, and a goſpel-light. The Spirit of God *without* a man, and the Spirit of God within him differs as much as day-light differs from lightening. A flaſh of lightening from Sinai, or the fiery law, terrifies and aſtoniſhes the man, and makes him tremble and quake under a ſenſe of ſin; but the day-light of a ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt makes one ſee himſelf the chief of ſinners, and yet fills him with holy triumph in the Lord the Saviour. A lighten-

ing confounds and ſurprizes; but the day-light gives a clear, diſtinct, and ſedate view of things as they are, with quiet and compoſure.—Now, try if you have got a humbling view and diſcovery of Chriſt, or a word from him that hath filled you with ſelf-abaſement, ſo as you reckon you cannot have vile enough thoughts of yourſelf, becauſe he hath, in effect, *told you all things that ever you did.*

2*dly*, Try what *Chriſt-exalting* and *commending exerciſe* you have been brought under; or what diſpoſition is wrought in you to commend and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt. If Chriſt and you have met together, as he did with this woman of Samaria, then the meeting hath wrought in you the ſame effect, the ſame diſpoſition to commend and exalt Chriſt; which you may try by theſe particulars.

1. If you have met with Chriſt in this manner, then you have ſeen him to be the CHRIST indeed, the *God-man*, the *Anointed* of the Father, the true *Meſſias*. Hath he told you, in effect, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he?* I that ſpeak unto you by this goſpel am he? Hath he borne home this upon your heart with convincing light and evidence, ſo as you have been brought to the apoſtle's faith, John vi. 69. *We believe and are ſure, that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the living God?* The faith of this is of ſuch importance, that Chriſt hath ſaid, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Now, hath he ſo ſpoken to you, as you were made, in effect, to think and ſay, I believe and am ſure, that he that ſpoke unto me was he. It was not the miniſter only that I heard, but the word came with ſuch light, life, and power, that, I think, no miniſter on earth, nor angel in heaven, could make the word to go through my heart as it did. It was like the ſound of the voice of the Son of God.

2. If you have met with Chriſt in this manner, then he hath made ſuch a *gradual approach* and *diſcovery of himſelf* to you as to raiſe in you gradually more and more a *high eſteem* of him as a Prophet, ſent of God to teach you, and to *tell you all things*, as it was with this woman: and though he himſelf, and all his words are precious to you, yet there are ſome particular words, among

many, that have taken more impreſſion, and ſtick more faſt than others. Though Chriſt ſpake many good words to this woman for her inſtruction, yet the word that made the firſt and deepeſt impreſſion, is what ſhe eſpecially kept in heart, *He told me all things that ever I did;* and what ſhe ſaw in this more clearly at firſt, ſhe ſaw more clearly after Chriſt gave her a clearer manifeſtation of himſelf. If the ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt commenced and began, when he gave her the firſt diſcovery of her lewdneſs and whoredom, and conveyed light, at the ſame time, into her mind to perceive that he was a prophet, yet ſhe was much in the dark, and took not up all that was intended by this diſcovery, till after he clearly diſcovered himſelf; and then the former leſſon is clearly taken up in all the parts of it. Therefore now, ſays ſhe, *He told me all things that ever I did.* Some may have ſuch obſcure and cloudy diſcoveries of Chriſt at firſt, that though they raiſe a high eſteem of Chriſt, yet the ſoul may be at a great loſs to know, what the full meaning of ſuch a word is that Chriſt ſpake to their ſoul, till after they get a brighter diſcovery of him; and then they may come to be more perfectly inſtructed in the ſame leſſon, which, at firſt, they did not ſo well apprehend: and in this his dealing with them may be like that, John xiii. 7. *What I do, thou knoweſt not now, but thou ſhalt know hereafter.*

3. If you have met with Chriſt in this manner, then your mind is ſet *above the world*, and you have left it behind you, as the woman here left her water-pot and ran to the city. O Sirs, when Chriſt appears to a man, he thinks no more of the world than a potſherd; he counts all *but loſs and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt;* yea, the moſt valuable things in the world are undervalued when Chriſt is diſcovered. As naturaliſts tells us, the loadſtone will not draw in the preſence of the diamond; neither does the world in all its glory and galantry draw the heart of any to it in the preſence of Chriſt. The reaſon of this is, the Sun of righteouſneſs darkens all the ſtars of creature-enjoyments, and makes them diſappear and evaniſh. A drink out of the fountain of living waters

waters makes all worldly comforts to be nothing but *broken ciſterns that can hold no water.* They whoſe hearts were never weaned from the world, never met with Chriſt. Again,

4. If you have met with Chriſt, then your hearts will be ſet upon the work of *commending him to others*, and particularly to your *neighbours and friends*, that they may become acquaint with him alſo. Thus the diſcovery of Chriſt vents itſelf in the woman here, *Come ſee a man who told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* A manifeſtation of Chriſt gives men ſuch a fill of the fulneſs of God, that they muſt have a vent: and as, in every ſaving manifeſtation, there is ſomething of the nature of Chriſt communicate, who loves to communicate of his fulneſs; ſo they to whom Chriſt diſpenſes of his grace and fulneſs, love to communicate alſo of what they have: not that the ſaints are to make a blaze of their religion to every one they meet with, or to caſt pearls before ſwine; but the love of Chriſt diſcovered to them fills them with ſuch ardent love to him, as obliges them, in all proper ways, to trumpet forth his glory and honour. They ſee ſuch a glory in him, that they think all ſhould wonder at him, and own him; *Is not this the Chriſt?* They reckon none ſo obliged to free-grace as they, and therefore they think it well becomes them to ſpread the ſavour of his name. They know alſo, by remembring what they themſelves were before they met with Chriſt, they know what a ſad ſtate they are into who want acquaintance with Chriſt; therefore, both out of love and regard to the glory and honour of Chriſt, and out of love, pity, and compaſſion to the periſhing ſouls of others, they deſire and endeavour to commend Chriſt to them both by their words and actions; both by their talk and walk, as the woman of Samaria did. What heart then and diſpoſition have you got to commend Chriſt to your neighbours and friends, to your children and ſervants? If you have no heart nor diſpoſition to ſuch exerciſe as this, ſurely you cannot make it out that you have met with Chriſt.

5. If you have met with Chriſt, then it will be your hearty

hearty desire not only to commend Christ, and speak of him to others, making him the great subject of your conversation, but also to have them *taste* what you have tasted, and *see* what you have seen, without resting merely on your report; *Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* Rest not on my report, might she say; but, O come and see him!—My friends, spiritual converse about Christ is much out of fashion in our degenerate age; yea, to enter on spiritual discourse in some companies, would be to expose a man to scorn and ridicule; a sad instance of estrangement from Christ and religion. But are there not some professors, whose speech of Christ, and of the things of God, betrays them and bewrays them; for, either it is but the outside of religion they talk of; for example, How well such a man preached, and how long such a man preached, and how many tables, or how many strangers were at such a communion, and all such little worth questions, no better than idleness; treating of the shell and not the kernel of ordinances: or, if they enter upon any substantial conversation, either they soon weary of that, or give evidence of such a selfish spirit, as bespeaks an inclination to commend themselves rather than to commend Christ. The import of their language is rather, come and here me, than come and see Christ. But, O Sirs, a meeting with Christ will fill the soul with a desire that others may share of what they share, and see what they have seen, with a desire to make the most effectual method that may be for drawing them to Christ. Hence, as this woman speaks out her very heart, so she attempts to draw them to Christ with the very same hook with which she was drawn ashore herself: *He told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* Therefore, come see him.

6. If you have met with Christ, and conversed with him, you will think long for *another meeting with him*, another sight of him; for this was the woman's disposition here; *Come see the man:* she spake as if she desired to be the foremost in returning again to see him. If you think you have got enough of Christ, it is a sign you have

have got nothing of him ſavingly. If you have got a ſaving ſight of him, then you will deſire more and more, and ſtill more, till you ſee him face to face in Immanuel's land. The diſpoſition of theſe that have attained to a ſight of Chriſt, and apprehended him by faith, is exemplified by the apoſtle Paul, Phil. iii. 12, 13, 14. It is ſtrange, as if they had attained nothing, apprehended nothing, in compariſon of what they aſpired after and would be at: *Not as though I had already attained; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Chriſt.* And again, *I count not myſelf to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things that are behind, and reaching forth to thoſe things that are before, I preſs toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* It is poſſible, that unfound profeſſors may fancy they have attained much, and yet have attained nothing; and reſting on their attainments, they reſt upon nothing but a ſhadow. It is poſſible that ſound believers may judge they have attained nothing, though yet they have attained much; and hence neglecting their attainments, they preſs after more and more of Chriſt. As Paul here, *I count not myſelf to have attained; I count not myſelf to have apprehended.* What count you of your attainments, man, when the great apoſtle Paul counts nothing of his, though he was one of the moſt clearly enlightened, and highly privileged men in the world? Happy is that ſoul who has attained the knowledge of Chriſt, and yet is as far from thinking that he knows, or has attained as much as may ſuffice him, that he rather counts as if he knew nothing, or had attained nothing; and therefore preſſes after more of Chriſt. O for the other ſight of him! O for the other meeting with him! O for another communion! another blink of his beauty and glance of his glory. Thus the happy woman counts not herſelf to have ſeen or attained enough of Chriſt, but longs for another ſight. It is an excellent mark of a meeting with Chriſt, to be longing for more and more of Chriſt here, and for full viſion of him in the higher houſe, and to be in a caſe practically to diſcover this in an examplary commendation of Chriſt to others; while it is not only the

matter

matter of your religious talk, ſignifying only *go ſee him*, but the import of your examplary walk; *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*

Uſe 3. Another *uſe* ſhould be by way of *exhortation*. And our exhortation ſhall be tendered, 1. To *believers*, who have got a diſcovery of Chriſt. 2. To *unbelievers*, who are yet ſtrangers to him.

1*ſt*, To you, *believers*, who have got a *ſaving diſcovery* of Chriſt working theſe effects upon you, leading you to condemn and debaſe yourſelves to the loweſt, and to commend and exalt Chriſt to the higheſt. O let me exhort you to a walk ſuitable to ſuch a meeting with Chriſt; that is, 1. To a *humble* walk, like one to whom Chriſt hath told all things that ever you did. 2. To a *holy* walk, like one that would commend and exalt a holy Jeſus, ſaying, *Come ſee a man* that hath ſo and ſo ſpoken to me; *Is not this the Chriſt?*

[1.] I would exhort you to a *humble* walk. O believer, hath he given you a ſight of yourſelf, and of your own vileneſs and baſeneſs, *Walk humbly with thy God:* and, in order to this, ſtill keep the glaſs before your eye, wherein he hath diſcovered you to yourſelf. There are ſeveral glaſſes wherein the ſaints behold themſelves which makes them have low thoughts of themſelves.

1. The looking-glaſs of the *law of God*, which diſcovers to them the vileneſs of their nature, thoughts, deſires, and affections; *When the law comes, ſin revives.* The law is a light by which *all things are reproved and made manifeſt*, Eph. v. 13. Keep this glaſs before your eye, even you that are wholly delivered from the law as a covenant of works, yet make conſtant uſe of it as a light; both a light to your head, to inform and convince you of your ſin and wickedneſs; and a light to your feet, to direct you in the paths of righteouſneſs.

2. There is the glaſs of a *renewed underſtanding* and a *rectified judgment* that the ſaints ſee their vileneſs in; when they have an impartial rule, and eye-ſalve with it, then they ſee themſelves as they are. If a man be blind,

he cannot ſee himſelf, though he have never ſo clear a glaſs before him; *Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkneſs*, Luke xi. 35. Wherever ſpiritual light and wiſdom is, there is a clear ſight people have of themſelves.

3. There is the glaſs of *conſcience*, ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt; this every true believer carries about with him. Whatever the underſtanding ſees, the conſcience comes and lays it at his door; and the conſcience being renewed and reconciled to God, it is then God's meſſenger to inform, to rouſe, to arraign, and condemn. Conſcience brings in all our unworthineſs and charges us with it; and then, what baſe and low thoughts have we ourſelves! Oh! I deſerve to be in hell, ſays the ſoul! I deſerve no mercy at the hand of God!

4. There is the glaſs of *experience*, in which every ſaint looks on himſelf, and beholds he is vile. Why, the ſad experience he hath of a treacherous backſliding heart, notwithſtanding of all the love of God and Chriſt manifeſted in him; the ſad experience of the *law of the members, warring againſt the law of the mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of ſin and death*, and making him cry many times, *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and death?* The ſad experiences of many inward luſtings, fightings, and reigning corruptions, and deſperate departings from the Lord. Alas! how vile does the ſaint ſee himſelf in this glaſs.

5. There is the glaſs of the *holineſs* of God, the glaſs of his infinite pure *glory*; Rev. iv. 8, 10. *When they cried, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; then the twenty-four elders fell down before the throne.* What made Iſaiah cry out of his uncleanneſs, but a view of this holy and infinitely pure glory of God. It was a view of the glorious holineſs of Chriſt that made John the Baptiſt ſay, *O! I am not worthy to ſtoop down and unlooſe the latchets of his ſhoes*; and yet he hath Chriſt's teſtimony, that there was not a greater prophet than he. Oh! how vile is a man in his own eyes when he looks to himſelf in this glaſs.

6. There is the glaſs of the *love* of God, and of his

grace

grace and *mercy* in Chriſt: we may appeal to you that have experience of it, if any thing in the world hath a greater power to humble the ſoul, and lay it in the duſt, than this, even the conſideration of the infinite love of God; *I was a blaſphemer, and a perſecutor; yet I obtained mercy.* O ſuch a monſter of ſin and wickedneſs as I am, and yet I have obtained mercy! O ſuch a dog, ſuch a devil, and yet I obtained mercy! O Sirs, when a child of God ſees the grace of God in the glaſs of a manifeſtation, O how low does he ſink in his own eſteem! All the ſtorms and bluſtering winds will not melt a rock of ice; but when the ſun-beams ariſe upon it, how is it then melted and thawed? Thus nothing in the world melts and thaws the hard heart ſo much, as the hope and ſenſe of divine love. When a child of God ſees the grace of God in the glaſs of a commendation, as when Chriſt ſays to the ſoul a word like that, Song iv. 7. *Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no ſpot in thee.* What! O what is this that a God is ſaying to the like of me, the blackeſt, the baſeſt of all ſinners! O! how low does ſelf ſink before the love and grace of God!

7. There is the glaſs of the *Spirit* of God ſhining upon the word of God into the underſtanding and the conſcience, and giving light to ſee into theſe other glaſſes. As he is the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of Chriſt*, and giving the knowlege of the law of God, the holineſs of God, the love and grace of God in Chriſt; for the cleareſt eye, and the cleareſt glaſs both, will ſhow nothing without light; ſo it is the Spirit of light that ſets all theſe things home upon the ſoul, and makes it apply all to itſelf, and ſo it becomes *yet more vile* in its own eyes. I ſhall add,

8. There is the glaſs of the *example* of God, of God's humility, his ſtupendous humility and condeſcenſion. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, humbling themſelves for our good.—See how God the *Father* humbles himſelf, Pſal. cxiii. 5, 6. *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high? who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth?* It is a ſtep of great condeſcenſion, that he ſhould apply himſelf in his providence to our wants and neceſſities; and

eſpecially, that he ſhould concern himſelf ſo far with ſinners, as to ſend the Son of his love out of his boſom to redeem them.—See how God the *Son* humbled himſelf when he ſtept out of his Father's boſom, out of the ivory palaces, where he was made glad from eternity; yea, though *he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* The glaſs of his ſuffering and humiliation, wherein he ſtept as far down as hell to quench the flames of infinite wrath, is a glaſs, indeed, wherein we may ſee ſin to be infinitely evil, and ourſelves to be ineffably vile.—See alſo how the *Holy Ghoſt* humbles himſelf; what a vaſt condeſcenſion is it for God, the Holy Ghoſt, to undertake to teach ſuch indocible creatures as we, to waſh ſuch lepers as we, to purge ſuch polluted ſouls, and to dwell in our hearts and boſoms, ſo full of unſavoury ſtems of hell? ——Hath a God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, given us ſuch examples of humility, and ſhall not this move us to ſtep a little down the hill? O proud ſinner, does God humble himſelf in your ſight, and will not you humble yourſelf before him? Can a man look into the glaſs of God's humility, and yet be proud?

O believers, keep theſe glaſſes in your eye, and walk humbly before him, who hath ſet the glaſs before you, wherein you have ſeen your vileneſs, and hath *told you all things that ever you did.* O maintain a deep and humble ſenſe of your own vileneſs and baſeneſs; and the rather, that ſuch a fountain of ſin and wickedneſs remains yet within you, as endangers you of doing all the ſame evils again that ever you did, even after he hath *told you all things that ever you did.* The body of ſin and death that remains in you, will incline you to ſins of all ſorts and ſizes: ſurely, then, you cannot walk too humbly and circumſpectly. I know no extreme of ſelf-abaſement you can run into, but will deſerve the name of pride, rather than humility.—It will be pride, and not humility, in you to *deny any thing* that God hath done for you in the way of grace, becauſe you are ſo vile in yourſelf; that ſmells as if you were not pleaſed that God ſhould get all the glory, but incline that you ſhould have had

ſome

ſome of it. O proud blaſphemer, come down from your altitude, and be content frankly to own and acknowledge that grace hath done much even for you.—Again, It will be pride, and not humility, for you to deny and refuſe to *take Chriſt* by the hand, when you are down in the duſt; or to take what help he offers you, even when you are lying in the mire. It was Peter's pride to ſay, *Lord, thou ſhalt never waſh my feet*; and yet no doubt he took it for humility.—Again, it is pride, and not humility to refuſe the *conſolations* of the Spirit, becauſe you are conſcious of your own vileneſs and abomination: do not lay upon yourſelf a load of ſelf-cenſuring more than God himſelf does; *I ſaid in my haſte*, ſays David, *I am caſt off from before thine eyes*, Pſal. xxxi. 22. David was in haſte when he ſaid it, and ſo may you ſay, Will God allow any favour or comfort to ſuch as I am? It is pride and arrogancy to meaſure God by your thoughts, and to limit his mercy.—Again, it is pride, and not humility, for you to deny him the *praiſe* and *commendation* due to him from you, leaſt you be not a fit hand for doing it. Why, ſays one, I think I would deſire to commend Chriſt to others, and ſpeak to his praiſe, but I am afraid I prove a hypocrite, and prove a ſcandal to religion. Why, man, woman, whatever come of you, let not Chriſt want his due, and it ſhall not fare the worſe with you; therefore, *Walk humbly with thy God*; or, as the word may be read, *Humble thyſelf to walk with thy God*. It is beſt humility to be found in the *way* of *duty*; and it is pride to withdraw from it, upon any conſideration of ſelf-unworthineſs.

[2.] I would exhort you to a *holy* walk, and thereby to commend and exalt Chriſt, as the woman of Samaria here did, ſaying, both with your lip and life, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* Where ſhe both takes ſhame to herſelf, and gives glory to God in Chriſt: and as our chief happineſs lies in the enjoyment of God, and our holineſs lies in glorifying him, which is our chief end; ſo the way to glorify him, is to commend and exalt Chriſt with our heart, lips, and lives. The text leads me to direct you particularly to this part of holineſs, namely, to commend him

him to all that you have opportunity to converſe with, and to converſe with before the world. Hath he met with you as he did with this woman? O then commend him, and preach forth his excellency. Here is a way how every private Chriſtian may be a preacher of Chriſt. This belongs not to miniſters only, but even you who are followers of Chriſt, among the female ſex, that cannot regularly be preachers of Chriſt in a miniſterial way; yet, O poor woman, it is comfortable that you may be a ſucceſsful teacher and preacher of Chriſt in a Chriſtian charitative way, by your ſpiritual communion and converſation. O *woman*, commend Chriſt to your *huſband*: O *man*, commend Chriſt to your *wife*. O *parents* and *maſters*, commend him to your *children* and *ſervants*. O *believer*, commend Chriſt to your *neighbours* and *friends*, and all that you have regular acceſs to.

1. Commend him *humbly* as this woman did; he *told me all things that ever I did*: ſhe kept her eye upon her own baſeneſs, and vileneſs, and unworthineſs, which he had diſcovered to her. Saints have a double eye, *viz.* a carnal eye, and a ſpiritual eye; or the eye of ſenſe, and the eye of faith. When they look upon themſelves with the carnal eye of ſenſe, then they forget all that ever they did, and what Chriſt told them and convinced them of, and are apt to gaze upon their own parts and gifts; and then ſelf creeps in and ſpoils their pleaſant exerciſe. But when they look upon themſelves with the ſpiritual eye of faith, then they loath themſelves, and commend Chriſt to purpoſe, and ſet him up to the higheſt, when ſelf is ſinking to the loweſt in rememberance of all that ever they did, as he told them.

2. Commend him *highly* alſo, as this woman did commend him as the great God, the ſearcher of hearts, the glorious JEHOVAH; when Arians and Atheiſts at this day are pulling him down from his throne, if it were poſſible. O ſet you him up, and commend him from your own experience, as the God-man that *told you all things that ever you did*. Commend him in his *offices*, ſaying, *Is not this the Chriſt?* the ſealed and conſecrated of the Father to be the Prophet, Prieſt, and King of Zion? Is not this JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, *The Lord our righ-*

righteouſneſs? Is not this JEHOVAH-ROPHI, *The Lord our phyſician?* Is not this JEHOVAH-SHAMMA, the IMMANUEL, *God with us?* Is not this the promiſed MESSIAS, in whom all the promiſes of God are *Yea* and *Amen?* Is not this the only Saviour, in whom all our ſalvation lies, being made of God to us *wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption?* O there is more to ſay to his commendation than the tongues of angels can trumpet forth to eternity. Again,

3. Commend him *zealouſly* as this woman did. *Come and ſee* HIM; it is not come and hear what I have to ſay of him; but, *Come ſee himſelf.* Let theſe whom you commend him to underſtand, that what you would be at, is, that they ſhould never reſt till they *ſee*, and *taſte*, and *handle this word of life;* and know, to their experience, what you know. And thus alſo,

4. Commend him *feelingly* as this woman did, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did.* You ſhould let ſtrangers to Chriſt, know that what you ſpeak of Chriſt, you have felt and experienced. If you know *the terrors of the Lord*, you will *perſuade men*, with an aking heart, and with holy fear and trembling; and if you know the conſolations of God, you will ſpeak of them with holy triumph, and as if your heart were leaping within you. Experiences is the mother of affection; commend him feelingly and affectionately. And yet,

5. Commend him *cautiouſly* as you alſo find this woman did. I think it is alſo remarkable, in this ſhort account that ſhe gives of her converſe with Chriſt, that ſhe hid, in her own boſom, that ſpecial part of Chriſt's diſcourſe to her that made moſt for her own conſolation, particularly, that glorious word, wherein he clearly manifeſted himſelf to her, ſaying, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he.* No, ſhe relates nothing of this; but tells them of that part of the conference which made moſt to her ſhame, as well as to his honour: *He told me all things that ever I did.* As if ſhe was content, that Chriſt ſhould be exalted on the ruins of her reputation; to let her name be debaſed, that his name might be exalted. Indeed, it tends moſt to her praiſe, that ſhe commends Chriſt

to

to them in that particular that made moſt to her ſhame; and ſhe tells them no more of what he ſaid. Here is wiſdom and caution: and, indeed, there are ſome precious things that Chriſt ſpeaks to his people when they are alone, that is not fit to be blazed abroad to every one, eſpecially to theſe that are yet ſtrangers to Chriſt, but, in commending Chriſt to them, it is ſafeſt to treat of theſe particulars that make moſt for the debaſing of ourſelves, and for the exalting of Chriſt.

6. And *laſtly*, O commend him *practically*, as you ſee this woman did, while ſhe ſays not, *Go ſee;* but, COME *ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did.* O believer, after a communion, if you have met with Chriſt, either now, or formerly, commend him, not only verbally, with your mouth; but practically, with your life, ſaying, in effect, *Come ſee him.* The life of commendation, is the commendation of the life; not of the lip, that ſays, *Go ſee;* but of the life, that ſays, *Come ſee:* your *Go ſee* will not convince any that you are in earneſt; but a *Come ſee* may make them follow your example. When you ſay, Go, and pray; go, and praiſe; go, and worſhip; go, and do this and that excellent ſervice; they only hear you: but when you go before them, and ſay, Come, and praiſe; come, and worſhip; come, and let us ſeek after Chriſt; then they both hear and ſee you; and are the more apt to come and ſee with you.

O believer, give evidence that you have met with Chriſt, by living *to* him as your end, and *on* him as your all; he *died that you ſhould not live to yourſelf, but to him;* and now he lives, that you may live upon him: *Becauſe I live,* ſays he, *ye ſhall live alſo.* O Sirs, let it be ſeen that you are three ſtory high; and that there is a new addition made to your ſpiritual ſtature by the light of a new diſcovery of Chriſt. The light of reaſon may make people good moral men; the light of gifts, good ſcholars; but the light of grace and experience, good and holy Chriſtians. O believer, beware of ſuch a practice and converſation, as will give occaſion to the world to ſay, Take up your *communicants;* they can tipple and drink, ſwear and debauch, as well as their neighbours.

bours. Oh! will you give occaſion to Chriſt to ſay, *He that ſat at table with me, and ate of my bread, hath liſt up his heel againſt me? Theſe are the wounds that I have got in the houſe of my friends?* O ſee that your converſation be a practical ſaying, *Come and ſee the man that hath told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* And let the leading part of your practice ly in this, a going again to ſee Chriſt, and attending and depending upon him, in all the duties of religion, in order to your getting more and more acquaintance with him. For, as it is a ſaving diſcovery of Chriſt that works this ſelf-debaſing, Chriſt-exalting effect; ſo the more of this you get, it will fit you ſtill the more for commending of him humbly and practically.

Let your walk then appear to be a goſpel-walk, a walking in Chriſt, and a going ſtill again and again to ſeek him and ſee him, that you may be the more like unto him; and that *beholding as in a glaſs his glory*, you may be *changed into the ſame image from glory to glory*. It is but a dunghill on which the ſun ſhines, and yet reflects no beams; but the ſun ſhining on a ball of ſilver, or upon a bright glaſs, or a ſtill water, it will make another ſun by reflecting the beams of it. Thus the broken beams of the glory of God, ſhining on Moſes in the mount, made him come down full of glory. And, O Sirs, the more of the glory of Chriſt you ſee, the more of the glory of God's holineſs will appear about you, and the more of heaven; of which it is ſaid, they *ſhall be like him, for they ſhall ſee him as he is*. The more frequently you return to ſee Chriſt, the more fit will you be for reſiſting the ſnares and temptations you meet with; for your heart is a magazine of hell where corruption lies, like a barrel of gun-powder, ready to take fire with the leaſt ſpark of a temptation, and to blow you up in the flames; but the more you come to ſee and converſe with Chriſt, the more you will get of the *living water*, which Chriſt gave to this woman; *the Spirit as a well of water, ſpringing up to everlaſting life*: and if you can get that barrel of powder ſunk into the bottom of this well, or the flood of the Spirit to drown

and overflow it, will you not then be more proof againſt all the ſparks of hell, and fiery darts of the devil? O believer, is not the Spirit promiſed as *floods upon the dry ground*, to drench the dry powder? And does not your profeſſion oblige you to this attendance and dependance upon Chriſt for more and more of the Spirit? For what mean you when you ſay, *Is not this the Chriſt?* Do you not mean, is not this the Anointed of God; anointed with the Spirit, to give the Spirit? Therefore, let your conſtant recourſe be to him on this errand, taking as many along with you as you can, by the influence of your advice and example, ſaying, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*

2*dly*, I would cloſe with a word to theſe that are yet *ſtrangers* to Chriſt, that never met with him, nor got ſuch a diſcovery of him as leads to this ſelf-abaſing and Chriſt-exalting exerciſe. And may I be allowed by you, O you that are believers in Chriſt in this houſe, to perſonate you in a few words, and ſpeak to theſe that are ſtrangers to Chriſt in your name. O Chriſtleſs ſinner, *Come ſee a man that hath told us all things that ever we did; Is not this the Chriſt?* The hearts of all that are acquaint with Chriſt, join with me in ſaying to you, Come ſee him, come ſee him: *That which we have heard and ſeen, declare we unto you, that you may have fellowſhip with us, in our fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, by the Spirit.* There are ſome here that can ſay, we have heard his voice telling us all things that ever we did; and we have ſeen his glory as the glory of the *only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*; and, *is not this the Chriſt?*—Come ſee a man that hath *opened our eyes*, and ſometimes diſpelled all our clouds and darkneſs; *Is not this the Chriſt?* anointed to be a *Prophet* to teach and inſtruct the like of you.—Come ſee a man that hath *pardoned all our ſins*, and waſhed us in his blood; *Is not this the Chriſt?* anointed to be a *Prieſt* to juſtify guilty ſinners like you.—Come ſee a man that hath *ſubdued all our iniquities*, and ſometimes given a daſh to the power of ſin and Satan in us; *Is not this the Chriſt?* anointed to be a *King* to ranſom ſlaves of the devil like you.—O come ſee a man, of whom we can ſometimes ſay, he

hath

hath *healed all our diſeaſes; Is not this the Chriſt?* anointed to be a *Phyſician* for healing ſuch deſperate diſeaſes as yours are.—Come ſee a man that hath *convinced us of all our ſins* and vileneſs of heart and way, and drawn out our hearts to him as the God-man; *Is not this the Chriſt;* IMMANUAL, *God with us?*——You need not ſay, where ſhall we ſee him? you have neither a journey to go down to hell, nor up to heaven; *the word is nigh:* and in the glaſs of this word he is to be ſeen. All the believers here can ſay, we never ſaw him any where but in this word of the goſpel, and in theſe public and private ordinances; and there he lies as open to your view as to ours. The word is the immediate object of our faith, wherein we ſee him; and when we hear him ſpeaking to us in his word and hear with ſpiritual underſtanding, then we ſee him. To hear and know his voice, is all one with ſeeing him; it is in his word that we hear him telling how polluted and filthy we are, and thus all that ever we did; and hear him telling how fair and lovely he is, and thus ſhewing us that he is the *Chriſt:* ſo that we ſee him in what he tells us in his *word;* and as we have ſeen him there, ſo you may ſee him there; you have the ſame glaſs, the ſame Bible, the ſame word, the ſame promiſe, the ſame goſpel-mirror to ſee him into, that ever any ſaint on earth ſaw him in ſince he aſcended to heaven: *The word is nigh, even in thy heart, and in thy mouth.* O then, reſt not on our report of him only; for, what he hath told us concerning ourſelves, and concerning himſelf, will not profit you, if you do not come and ſee that our report is true. Come and ſee him yourſelf, by believing and taking it on his own word, that he is the Chriſt, anointed for your behoof.

But what is this I am doing, ſpeaking to you only in the name of believers? Here, (however baſe a worm I am) my office warrants me to ſpeak to you in a greater name than theirs or ours; yea, in his name, the *latchet of whoſe ſhoes we are not worthy to unlooſe:* In his name, then, who is the glorious JEHOVAH, the God-man, that can tell you all things that ever you did, and thereby give you convincing evidence that he is the

Chriſt, I call you to come and ſee him. He can tell you ſome things about you, O ſinner, that the world does not know, and cannot tell you. And may I preſume in his name to tell you ſomething, perhaps, yet a ſecret, which if he would bleſs, you might therein hear him, telling you all things that ever you did. Let me allude to what paſt between Chriſt and this woman in the context, upon their firſt meeting; and, perhaps, there is more than an alluſion in it.

Chriſt hath been at this occaſion, offering you the living water; and if you be ſaying with this woman, whether in jeſt or earneſt, *Sir, give me this water that I thirſt not;* Chriſt is in effect, ſaying, *Go call your huſband and come hither;* bring whatever huſband you are in league with, that ſo your league and covenant with death, and your marriage with hell may be diſannulled. If you be ſaying with this woman, *I have no husband;* why, then you may hear Chriſt ſaying, in effect to you, *Thou haſt well ſaid, I have no husband;* for as long as you are not married to Chriſt you have no head, no husband, that can do you any ſervice. But, *behold, you have had five husbands;* you have had many huſbands; and *whom you are now married to is not your huſband,* your true and lawful huſband. O harlot ſinner, you have been married unto many a black huſband all your days; you have been married to the law, the firſt huſband; married to your own righteouſneſs and ſelf-conceit; you have been married to the world; married to your luſts; yea, and married to the devil; your heart hath been joined to idols: and now, by this, he is telling you all that ever you did. He is telling you what you have been, and what you have done. Have you been a common ſtrumpet, a common whoremonger, a common drunkard, a common ſwearer, a common Sabbath-breaker, a neglecter of prayer in ſecret, and in your family? Yea, you have been a hypocrite, an atheiſt, a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, a murderer, an injurious perſon, unjuſt, unfaithful to God and man, unmerciful, unbelieving, impenitent. He is telling you your ſecret faults, not only what you did in ſuch a company, but what was that you did in ſuch a private place.

When

When thou waſt under the fig-tree I ſaw thee, ſays Chriſt to Nathanael, in another caſe; ſo ſays Chriſt to you, when thou waſt under the dark ſhade, hiding thyſelf from the eyes of men, my eye was upon thee; under the cloud of night I ſaw thee; and, *can any hide himſelf in ſecret places that I cannot ſee? do not I fill heaven and earth, ſays the Lord?* Yea, I ſay, all that ever you thought, or did, or deſigned to do; and I ſaw into thy heart and wicked nature from whence thy atheiſtical practices did ſpring. And now, if by his word he be telling you all things that ever you did, then what do you ſay to this queſtion, *Is not this the Chriſt?* Is he at one glance giving you a view of all your lewdneſs, all your baſeneſs, all your vileneſs? Then do you perceive that he is a Prophet, when he tells you how many falſe huſbands you have had? O! *Is not this the Chriſt?* Is not this the only true Huſband with whom your ſoul ſhould match? Is he the man that hath told you all things that ever you did? O then, *Will you go with this man?* Will you marry the man, the God-man, the Chriſt of God? He is content, even after all your whoredoms to receive you for a bride, even after you have been adulterouſly matched with the devil and your luſts; will you match with this man, and quit with all your baſe huſbands that have been haleing and dragging you to hell, and ſay, *What have I to do any more with idols?* Oh! my five huſbands have ruined me; my falſe unhappy matches can give me no comfort, either in death or through eternity, but rather contribute to my eternal condemnation. But here is a glorious wonderful match in my offer, *a man that hath told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt*, that is anointed to ſave me from the guilt of all that ever I did, and to ſave me from ſin and wrath. O then, is it a match? is it a bargain? Why, ſay you, Who is he that I may match with him? Where is this Chriſt? Behold, man, woman; he is ſaying to you in this word, *I that ſpeak unto thee, am he;* tho' it be by a poor ſinful meſſenger that I am ſpeaking to you, ſays Chriſt, yet, *I that ſpeak unto you, am he.* And now, O hath he diſcovered himſelf to you in this word, and drawn out your

your heart to the match? Then think not ſtrange that you meet with ſome interruption in his converſe with you; but go your way and leave your water-pot behind you; and give up not only with your unlawful huſbands, but even with your lawful works and endeavours in point of truſt and confidence: for your own black righteouſneſs, and doings of yours, will never draw a drop of living water to you; but let your heart ſay, *In the Lord only have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength; I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God, and make mention of thy righteouſneſs, even of thine only.* O may it be heard tell of you in the city of Dunfermline, as it was heard of this woman in the city of Samaria, that you have met with Chriſt; that by your words and walk henceforth you are determined to ſay, *Come ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?*

THE END.

9 FE 65

THE following new and useful Theological Publications, are all lately printed, and sold by WILLIAM SMITH, at his Shop, foot of the Salt-mercat, *viz.*

I. A Defence of some important Doctrines of the Gospel, in twenty-six Sermons, most of which were preached at Lime-street Lecture, by nine eminent dissenting Ministers, in 2 vols. Price, neatly bound, 5 s.——*These Sermons are allowed, by good judges, to be the best illustration and defence of a number of the essential doctrines of Christianity, that are to be found extant; and, as such, warmly recommended by the late justly celebrated Mr. Hervey.*

II. Select Sermons, on several important subjects, by the Rev. Mr. John Swanston, late minister of the gospel at Kinross. To which is prefixed, a short account of his life. Price bound, 3 s. the coarse, and 4 s. the fine.—*The subjects here handled are of a very interesting nature, containing many precious gospel truths, tending to awaken the secure, instruct the ignorant, comfort the dejected, and feed the heritage of God, with knowledge and understanding.*

III. Sermons and Select Tracts, on several subjects. By the late Rev. Mr. James Hervey. To which is prefixed, a full account of his life. Price, neatly bound, 2 s. 6 d.——*This volume contains the whole of Mr. Hervey's Sermons; and most of the Tracts were never before printed with any former edition of his Sermons.*

IV. Faith and Practice: or the great Duty of receiving Christ, and walking in him opened, in twelve Sermons. By the Rev. Mr. Ralph Erskine, late minister of the gospel in Dunfermline. To which is prefixed, a short account of his life and writings, with an elegiac poem. Price, neatly bound, 2 s. the coarse, and 2 s. 6 d. the fine.——*The subject of these Sermons is of the utmost importance: It comprehends the whole Christian life and practice; or, as the author himself observes, it contains the whole Bible in one verse, the whole gospel in one sentence, the whole sum of heart and life-religion, and all that concerns either faith or manners.*

V. Twenty-five Discourses suitable to the Lord's Supper, delivered just before the administration of that sacred ordinance. By the late reverend and learned John Owen, D. D. sometime Vice-chancellor of Oxford. Price of the fine, neatly bound, 1 s. 6 d. the coarse, plain bound, 1 s —— *These sacramental discourses are plain, evangelical, and practical; well adapted to assist the pious meditations of serious Christians, of every denomination, in their approaches to the Lord's table, and to promote vital religion in the soul.*

VI. The Christian Oratory: or, the Devotion of the Closet displayed. To which is subjoined, several practical discourses, on various important subjects. By the Reverend Mr. Benjamin Bennet, in 2 vol. Price, 5 s. the course, and 6 s the fine, neatly bound.—*The subjects of meditation, exhibited in these volumes, are interesting, copious, and full; contain a rich variety of judicious thoughts, on the most important points, new, useful, and striking, well adapted to assist the pious meditations of the truly devout; and have been had in universal esteem, by the truly godly.*

VII. The Knowledge of Christ crucified and glorified, opened and applied; in twenty Sermons, on Christ's Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Sitting at God's right-hand, Intercession, and judging the World. Preached at Merchants-Lecture, in Pinner's-Hall. By the Reverend and Learned Mr. John Hurrion, late dissenting Minister in London, in two volumes. Price 5 s the fine, and 4 s the coarse.—*As the subjects of the Sermons are of the utmost importance, being the cardinal doctrines of the Christian system; so they are handled, by the judicious Author, with the greatest accuracy, perspicuity, and fulness: and allowed, by good judges, to be preferable to any upon the subjects.*

The following Books are Sold by W. SMITH.

Abernethy's Sermons, 2 vol.
Addiſon's evidences
Ambroſe whole works
——— looking unto Jeſus
——— firſt and laſt things
——— war with devils
Anſon's voyages round the world
Arabian nights, 4 vol.
Arian's Epictetus
Armſtrong's miſcellanies, 2 vol.
Alembert's miſcellanies
Bailey's Engliſh dictionary
Bayfield's bulwark of truth
Brown's dictionary, 2 vol.
——— church hiſtory, 2 vol.
——— ſcripture metaphors
——— Chriſtian journal
——— large and ſmall catech.
——— hiſtory of the ſeceſſion
Beaumont's Miſſes mag. 4 vol.
Beveridge's private thoughts
Boſton's works, folio
Body of divinity, 3 vol.
——— fourfold ſtate
——— on the covenant of works
——— on the covenant of grace
——— crook in the lot
——— characters of true believers
——— Chriſtian life
——— view of the other world
Buttler's ſermons, 2 vol.
Burnet's theory, 2 vol.
Bryn's different tracts
Burt's European ſettlements, 2 vol.
Burnet's hiſtory, 6 vol.
Cruickſhank's church hiſt. 2 vol.
Cole on God's ſovereignty
Confeſſion of faith
Cloud of witneſſes
Derham's phyſico-theology
——— Aſtro-theology
Doddridge's expoſitory, 6 vol.
——— Riſe and progreſs
Drelincourt on death
Durham on the Song
Dickenſon's religious letters
E. Erſkine's ſermons, 4 vol.
R. Erſkine's practical works, fol.
——— goſpel ſonnets
Fieldings works, 12 vol.
Fiſher on the catechiſm
Fordyce's ſermons, 2 vol.
Guyſe's paraphraſe, 6 vol.
Guthrie's hiſt. of Scot. 10 vol.
——— geographical grammar
Gray's ſermons, 2 vol.
Grotius on the chriſtian religion
Guthrie's ſaving intereſt
Hall's contemplations, 3 vol.
Hall's goſpel worſhip, 2 vol.
——— goſpel church
——— on church fellowſhip
Hale's contemplations, 2 vol.
Hervey's works, folio
——— octavo, 6 vol.
——— dialogues, 2 vol.
——— meditations, 2 vol.
Hume's hiſt. of England, 8 vol.
Homer's Iliad and Odyſſey
Joſephus' hiſtory, 4 vol.
Johnſton's dictionary, 2 vol.
Kaim's elements, 2 vol.
Locke's eſſays, 3 vol.
Leland's defence of chriſtianity
Milton's paradiſe loſt, 2 vol.
M'Lauren's eſſays and ſermons
M'Ewen on the types and eſſays
Nettleton on happineſs
Owen on the glory of Chriſt
Pope's works, 6 vol.
Plutarch's lives, 6 vol.
Rolin's antient hiſtory, 10 vol.
——— Belles letters, 4 vol.
Rynal's hiſt. of America, 2 vol.
Rowe's works, 4 vol.
Stackhouſe's hiſtory, 6 vol.
Smith's diſcourſes
Seed's ſermons, 2 vol.
Spectator, 8 vol.
Stern's ſermons
Swift's ſermons
Williſon's works
Witſius's œconomy, 3 vol.
Witherſpoon's works, 5 vol.
Young's works, 4 vol.

9 FE 65